



DEJACH WUBE SEFER

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BACKGROUND INFORMATIONS

Dejach Wube Sefer in literature



_ "Dejach Wube" Sefer is located in the sub-city of **Arada**, one of the **oldest area** of urbanization of the city. It expands for nearly **290.500 mq (29 hectares)** in the North-East of the Ghebi, along the road that connects Addis Ababa with the Entoto hills.



_ Most of the old neighbourhoods derive their names from the names of nobles who were granted plots around the palace of the emperor Menelik II. In case of the "Dejach Wube" sefer (otherwise called Wube Bereha), the name relates to **Dejazmach Wube** (1800-1867) also known as Dejazmach Wube Haile Maryam. Son of a powerful **regional chief of Simien** he came to power in 1826 on the death of his father. He extended his rule to Tigre population and became one of the most powerful northern Ethiopian rulers.



_ Dejach Wube Sefer was well-known for being one of the neighbourhoods of Addis where **prostitutes** were highly concentrated during the Italian occupation. And as such a number of tales and poems about it abound. The poems and tales glorify "Dejach Wube" neighbourhood as a **place of romance**.



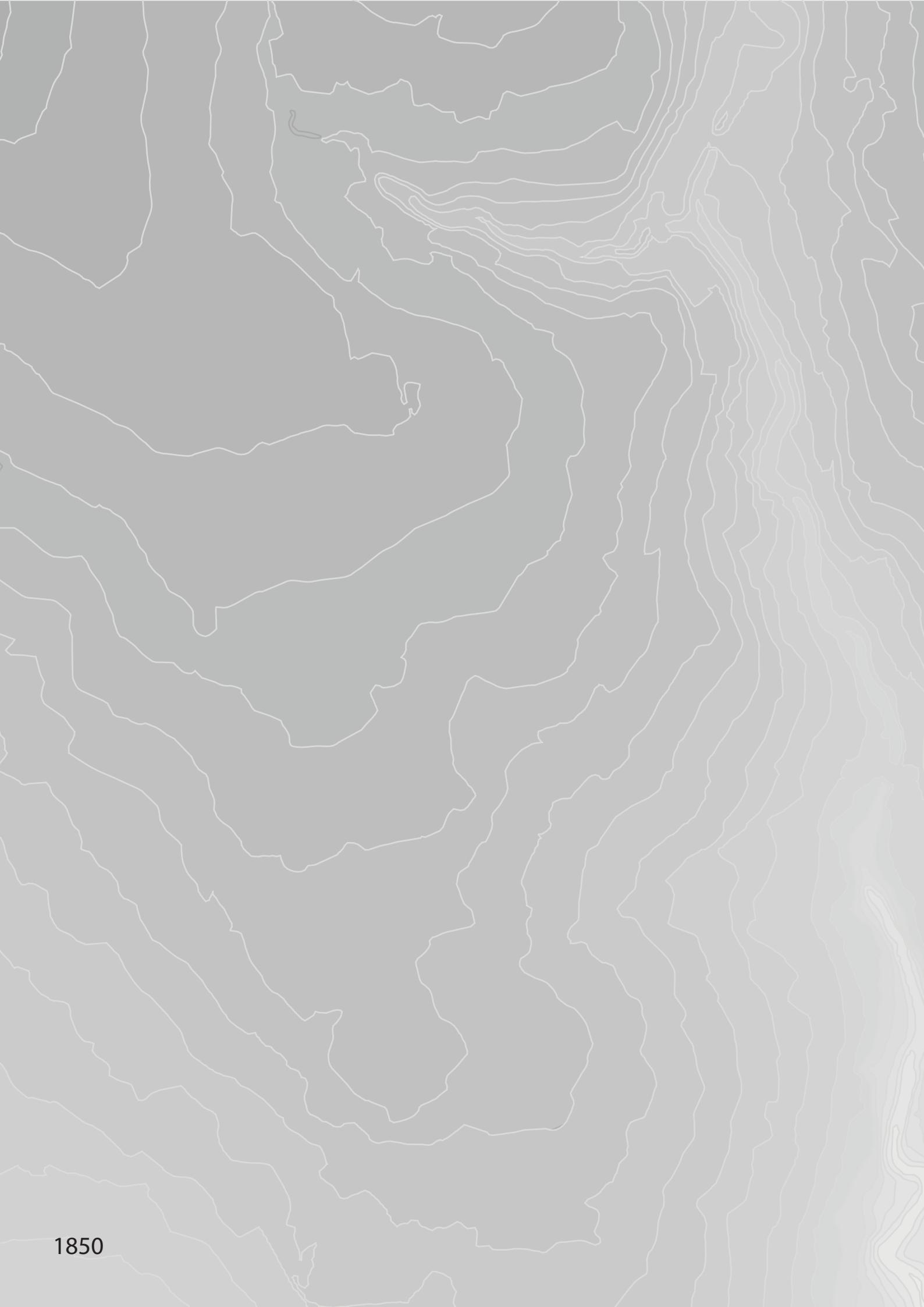
_ The Ethiopian government has recently launched a **new urban plan** for the modernization of the city, providing **massive construction** operations entrusted mostly to Chinese companies, for the construction of roads, bridges, railways, offices, condominiums and shopping centers in the central areas of the city. The work is expected to be complete in 2020.



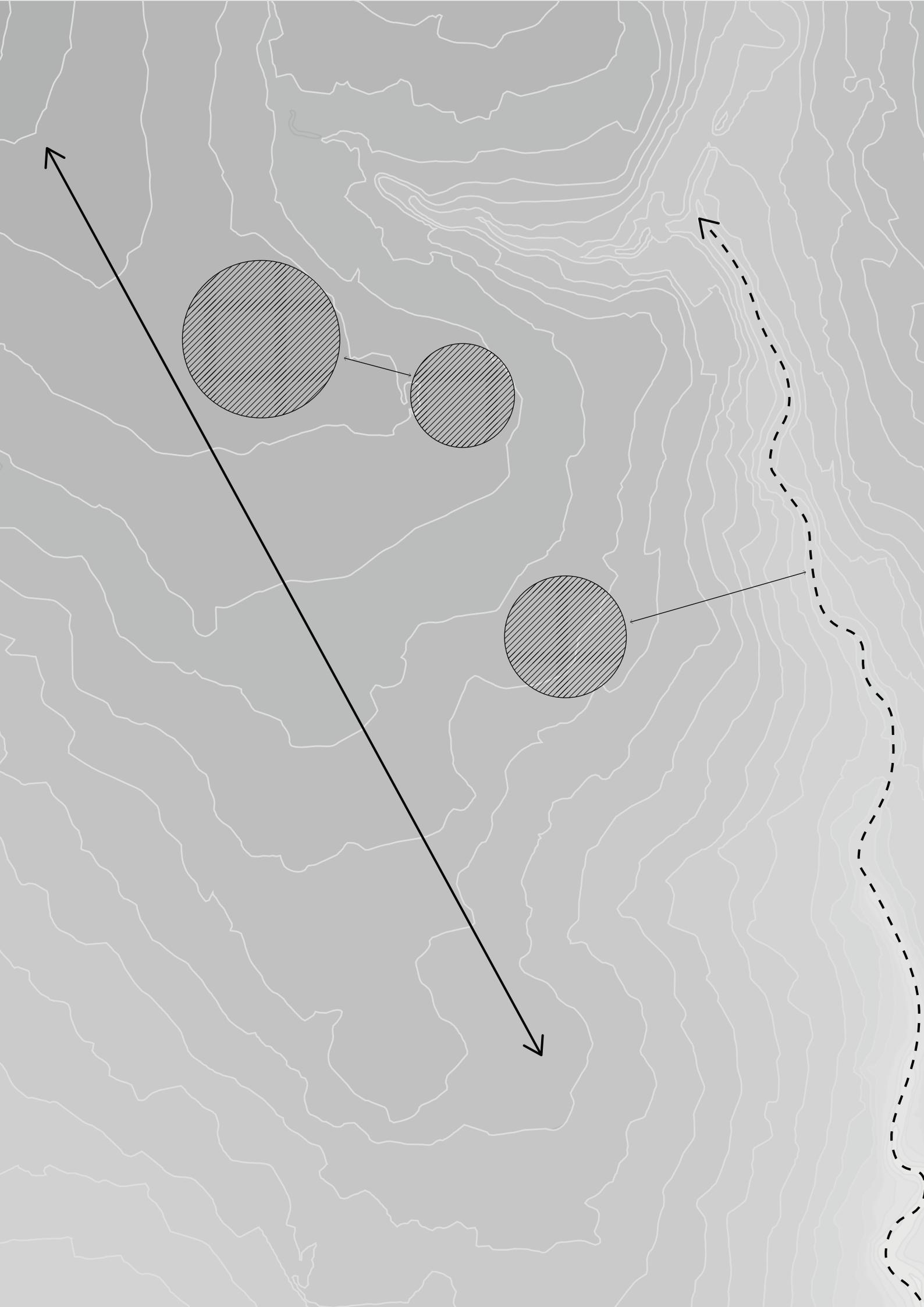
_ "We don't have official numbers. We can assume that nearly **2000 shacks**, **400 governmental houses** and **200 small villas** of the 1970's were **demolished** in order to gain space for new constructions. Hypothetically within each house a nucleus of 5 people was used to live. Where are now all the nearly **13.000 people evicted** from their houses? Almost impossible is to meet these people during the day; during the night however the situation changes and all the these persons pour out in "Mercato" area where for few cents they rent a place on the ground to lie down and sleep inside existing warehouses. [...] few people received an apartment in one of the new apartment buildings; this happens for two main reasons: the first one is that only **people with regular licenced house can afford them** (not the majority: self-built not licenced constructions were used to be built with rough metal sheet). Secondly only **people that are able to afford the mortgage payments are allowed to be allocated there**: one more time, the minority."

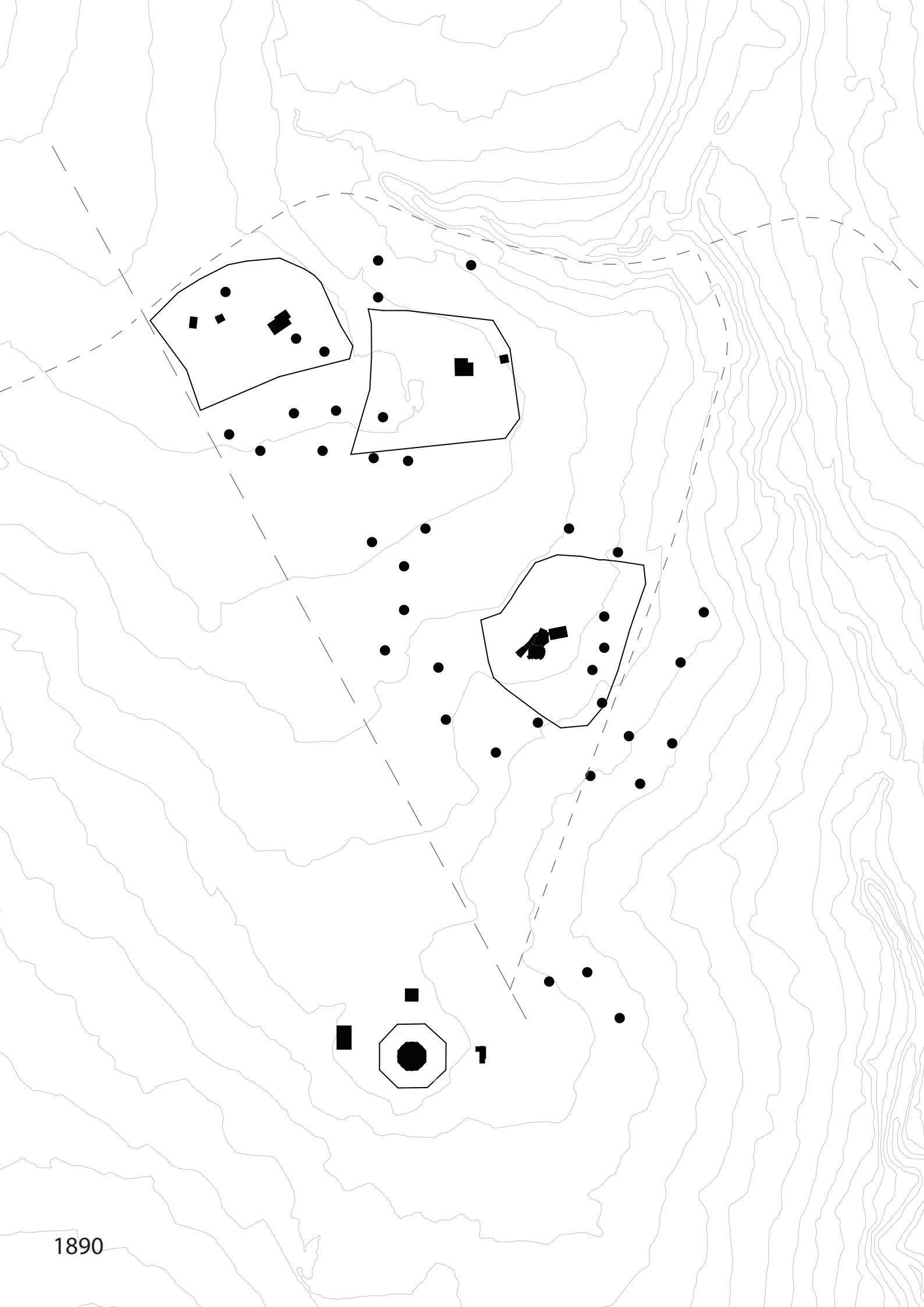




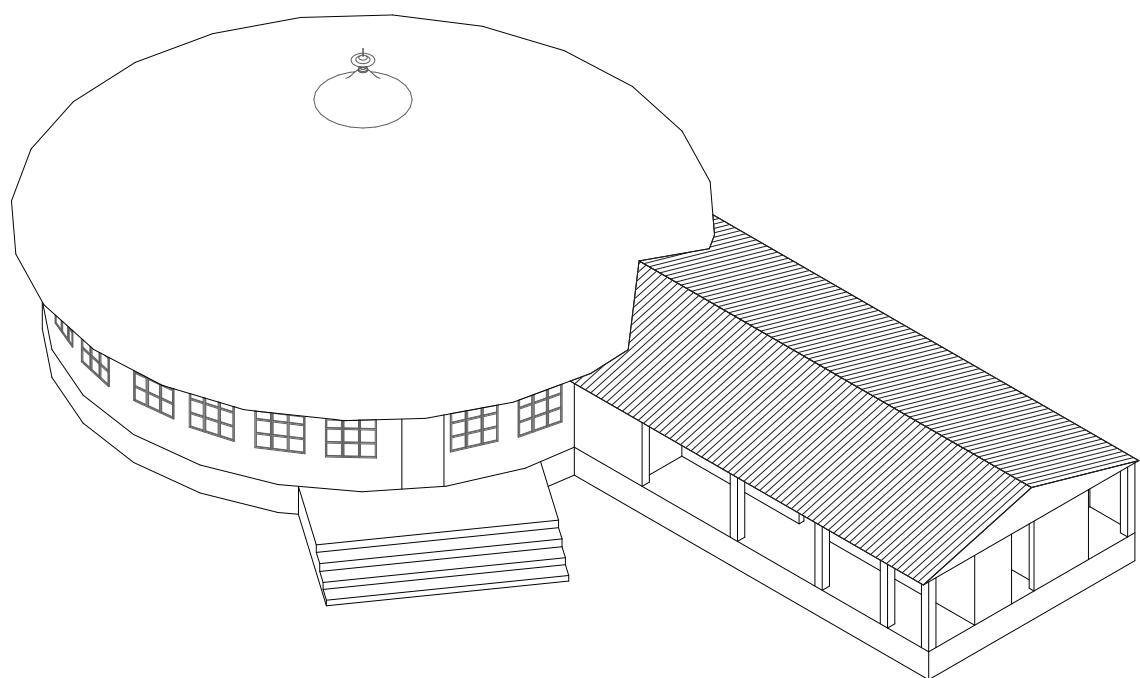


1850

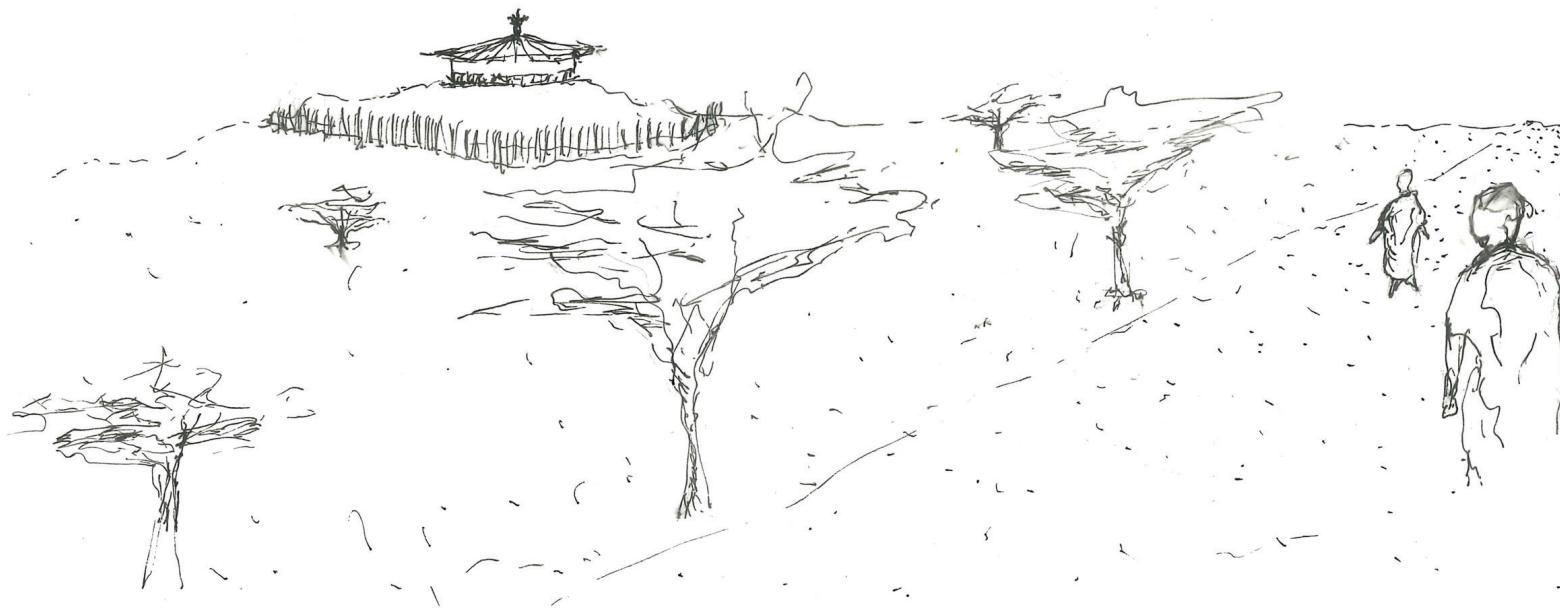




1890

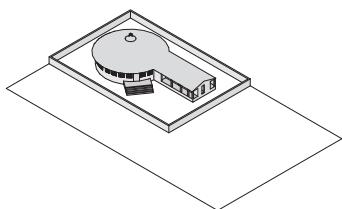


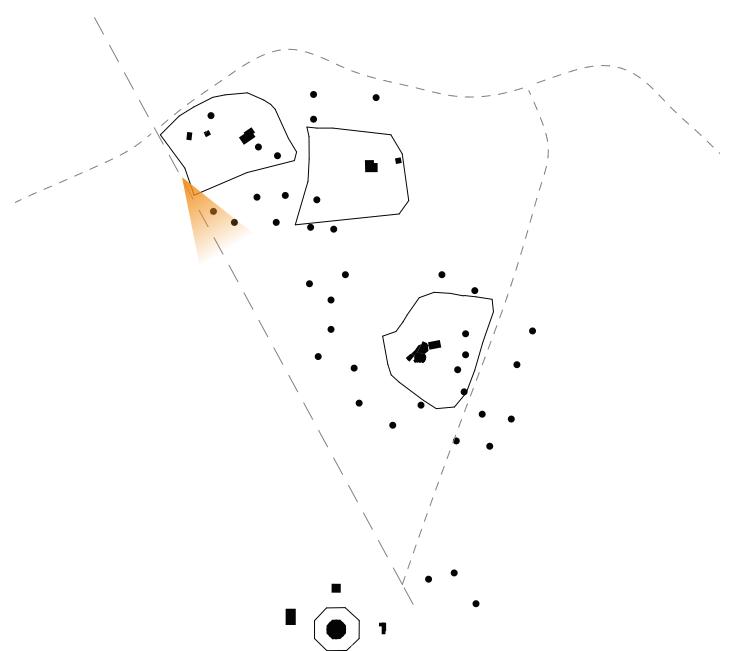
RAS PALACE



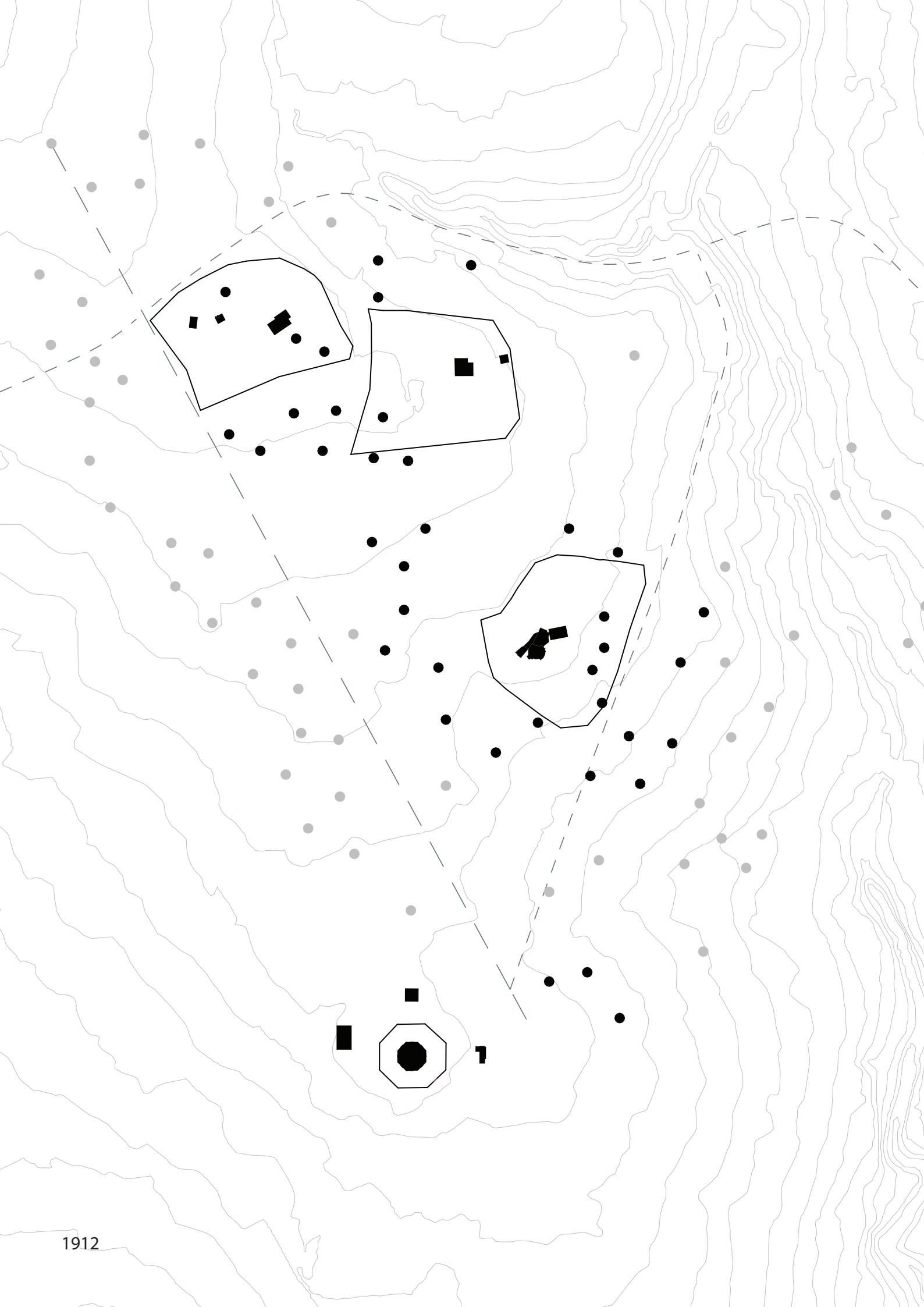
1890's
the foundation of the city

City organized as military camp
with lack of a real infrastructure:
roads connections between
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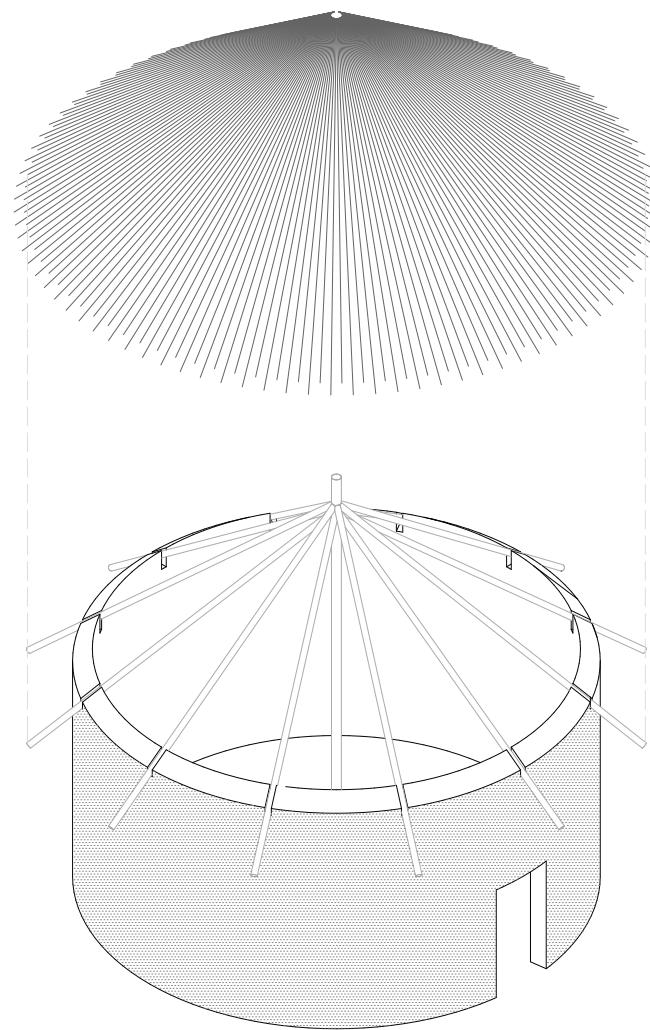




1890's



1912



TRADITIONAL HOUSING



1890's

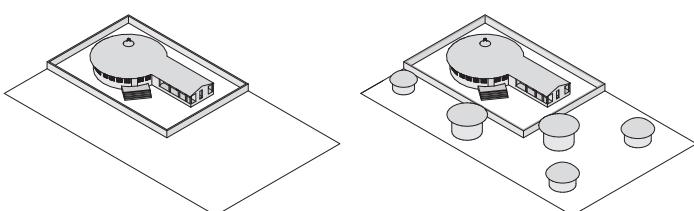
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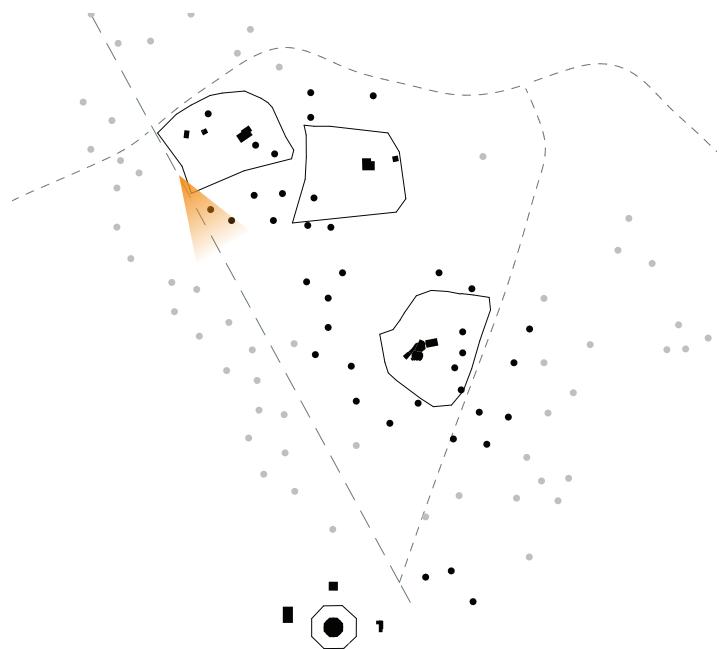
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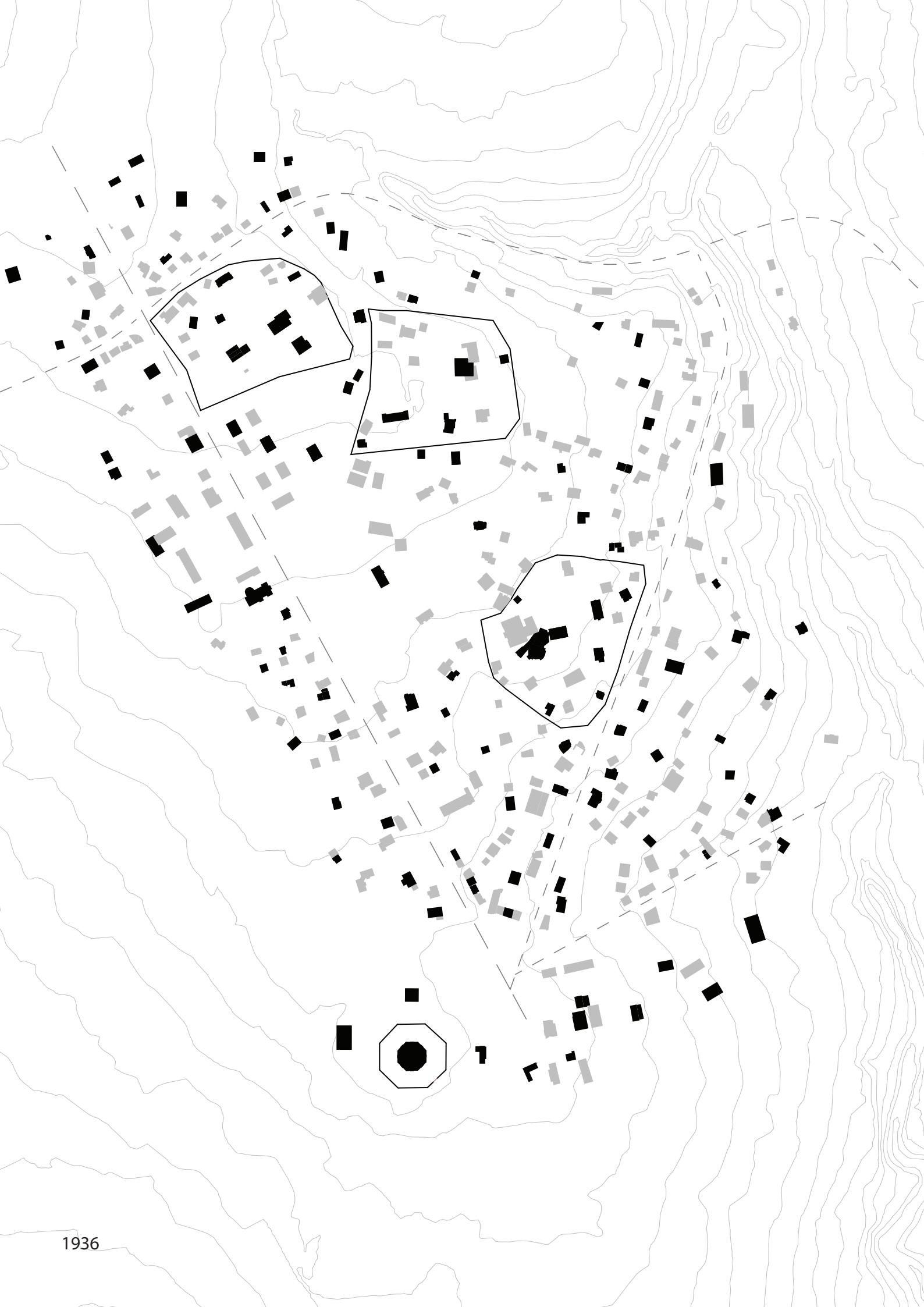
the development of the
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Inhabitants numbered around
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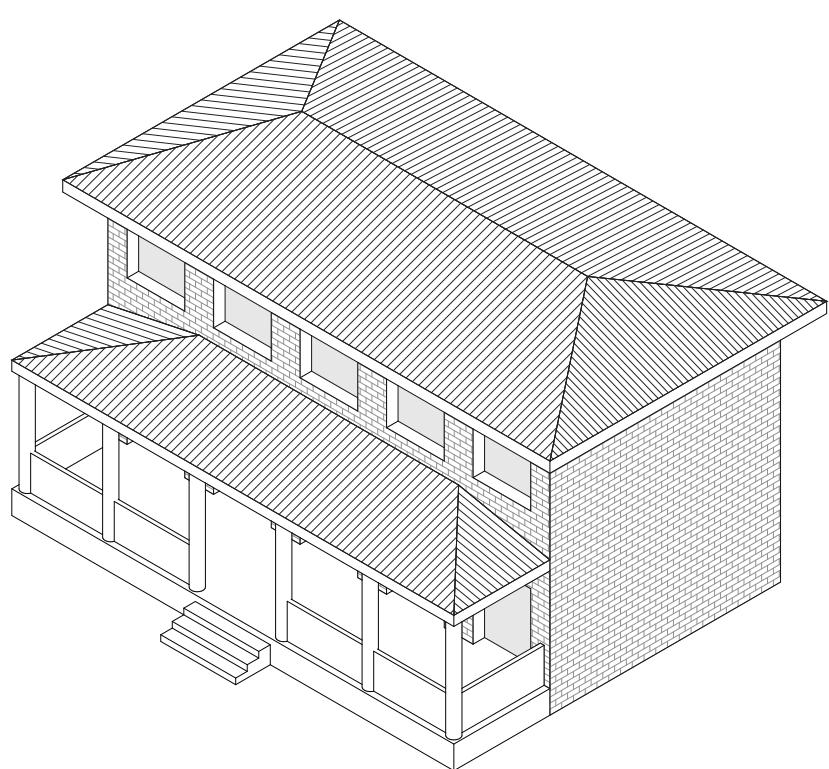




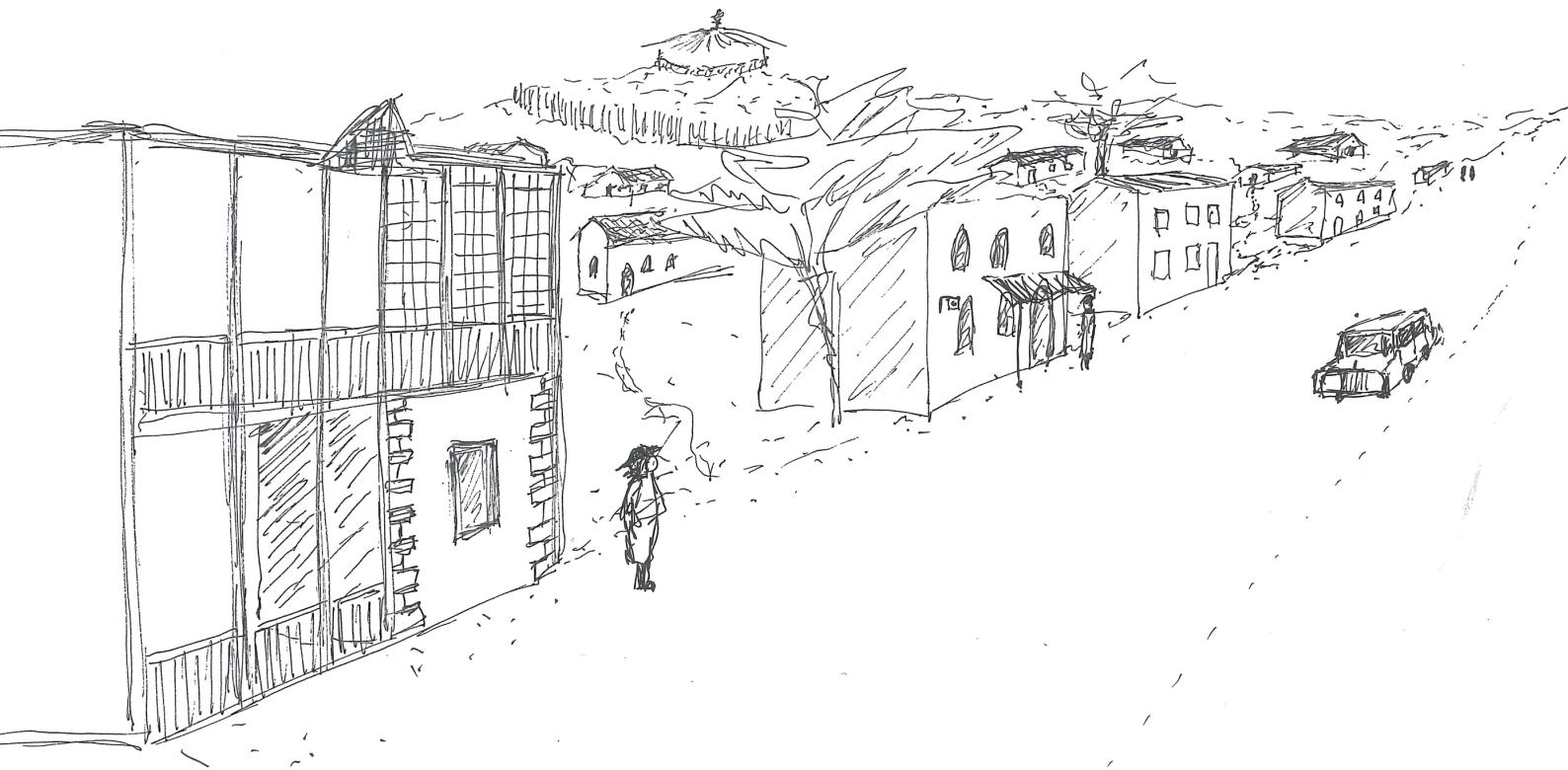
1912



1936



COLONIAL HOUSING



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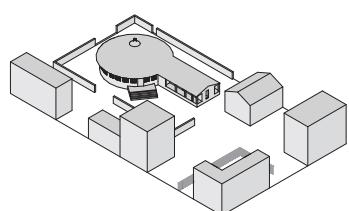
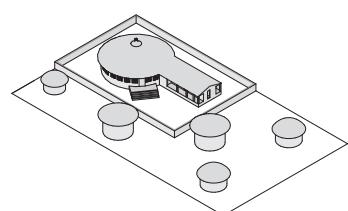
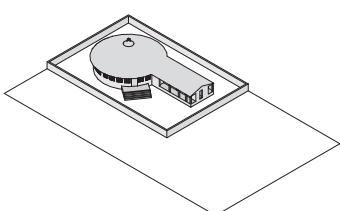
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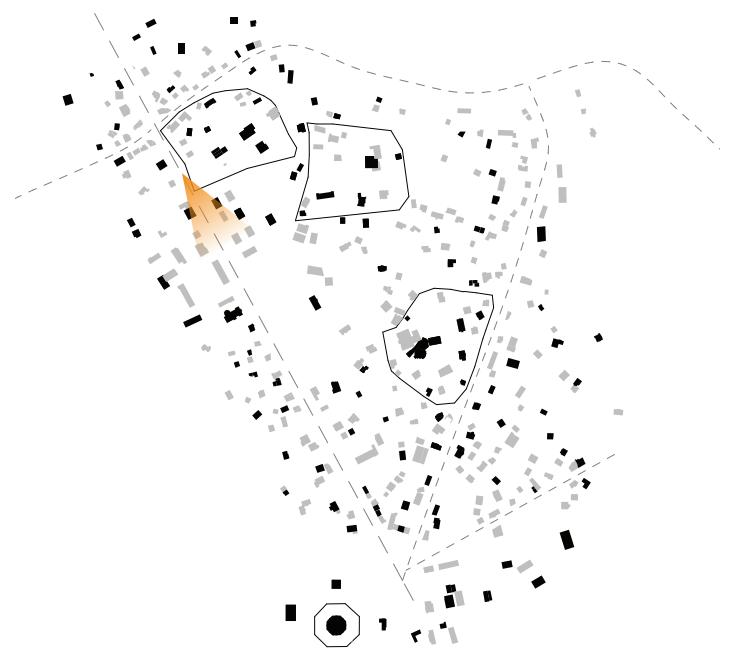
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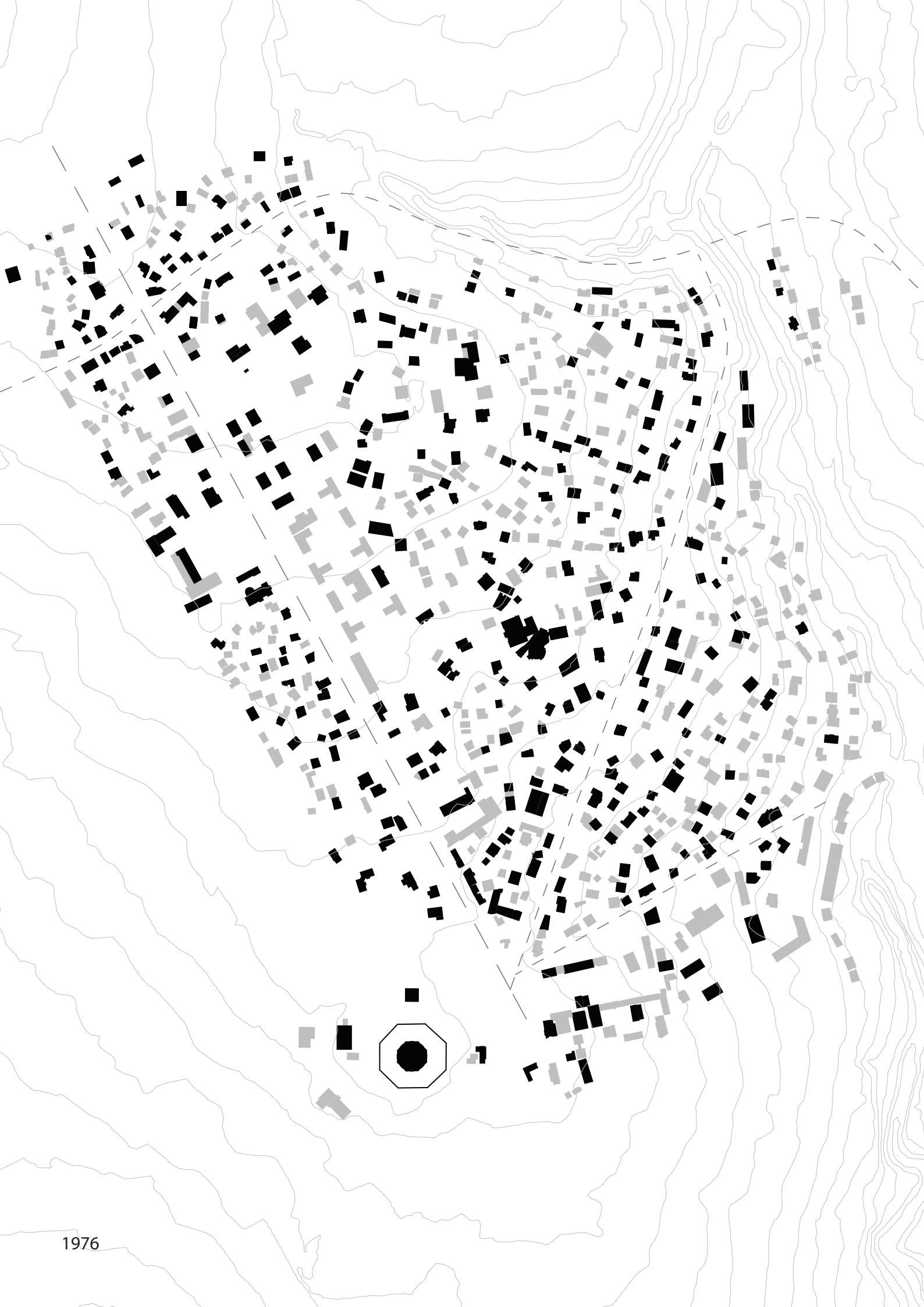
the Italian occupation

Division established between local population and Italians: center of the city for Italians, locals moved in other development areas

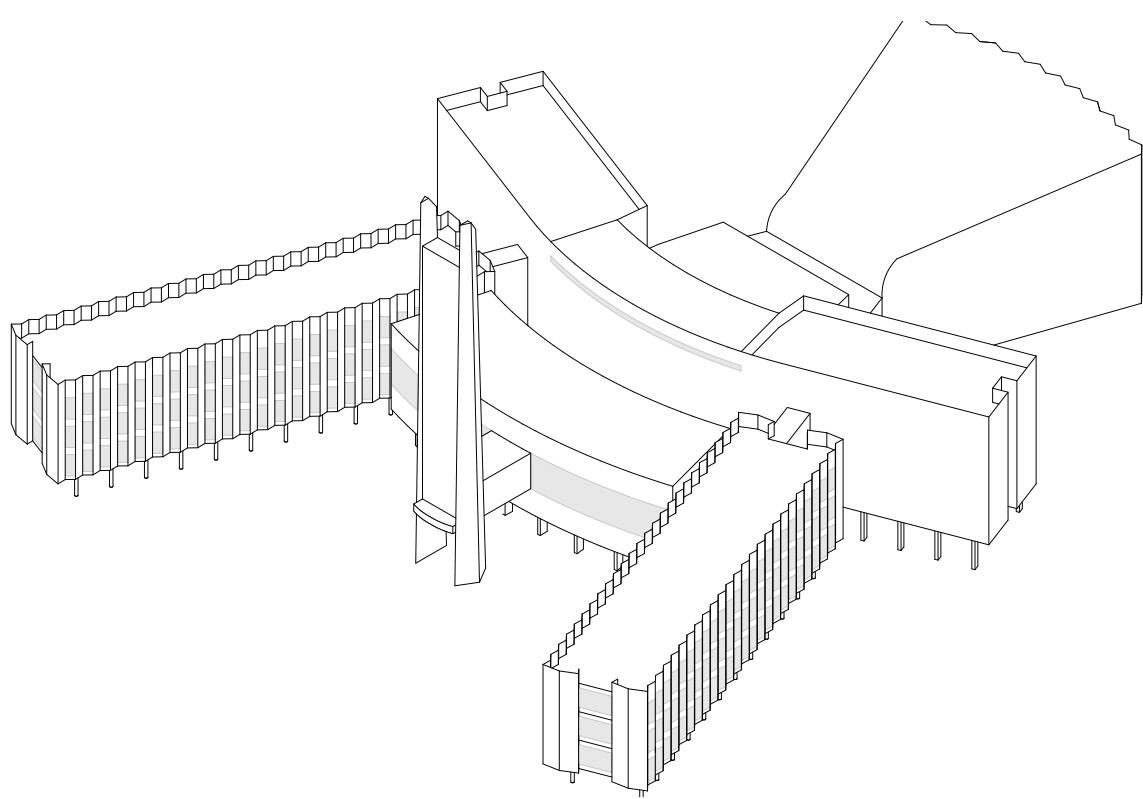




1936



1976



TOWN HALL



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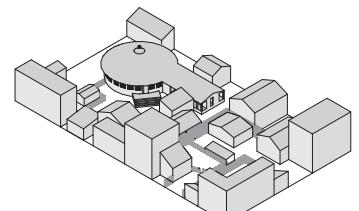
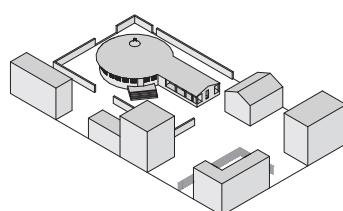
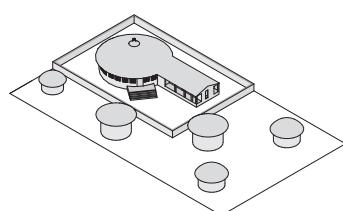
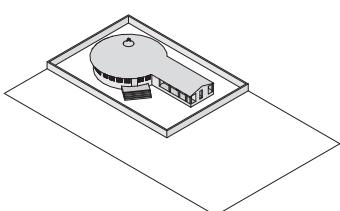
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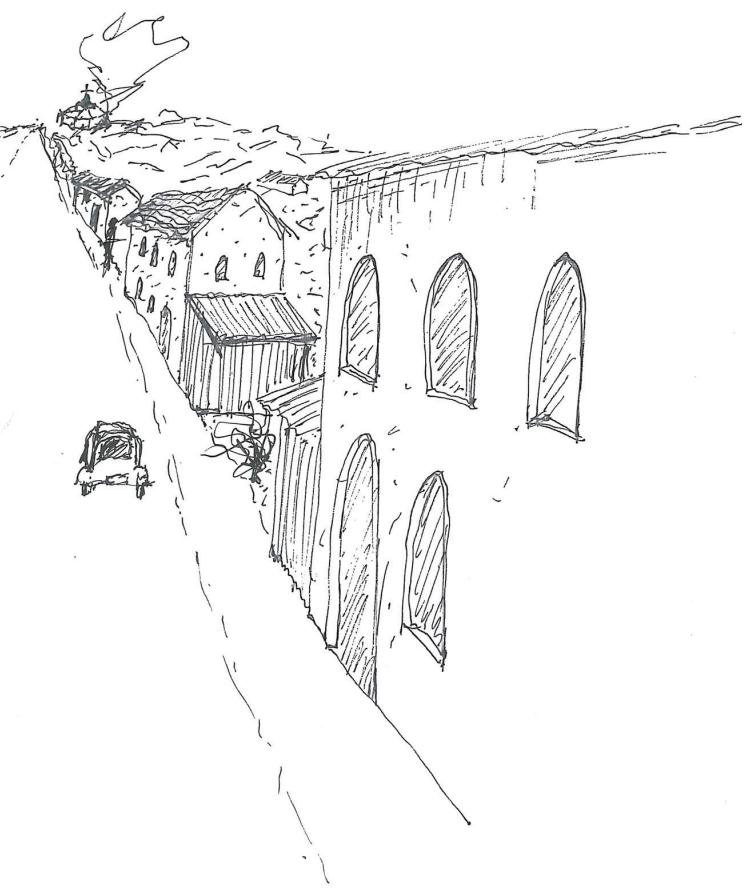
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1975

the Derg regime and the land collectivization

Proclamation Act of 1975: Derg nationalized all land of the country: household could hold only one house, only small extensions were permitted

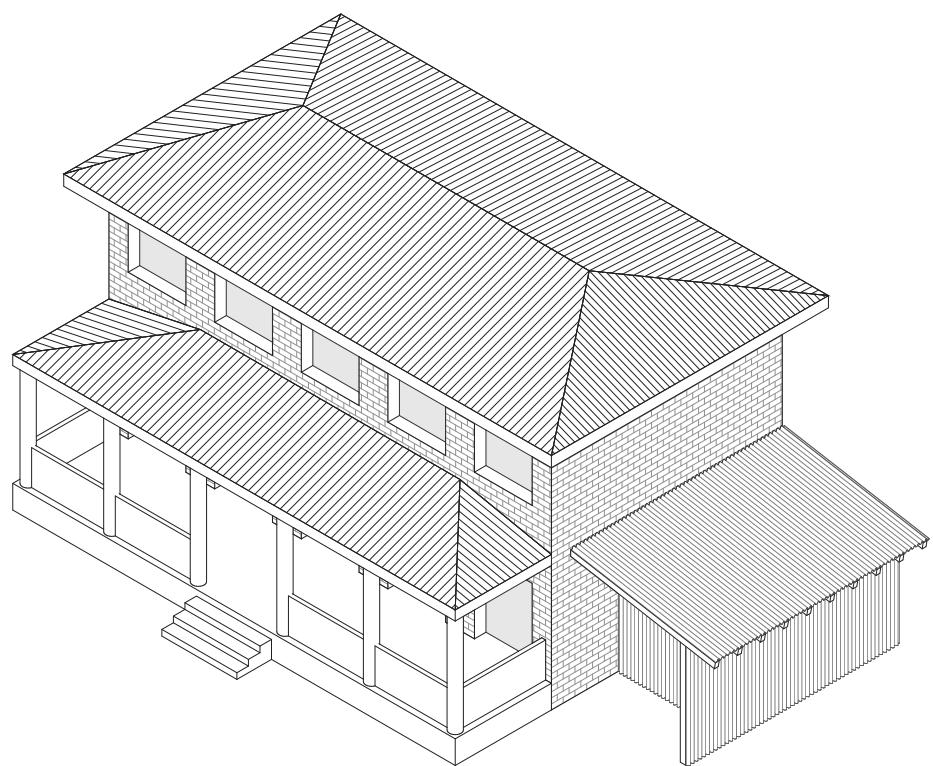




1976



1990



ADDITION



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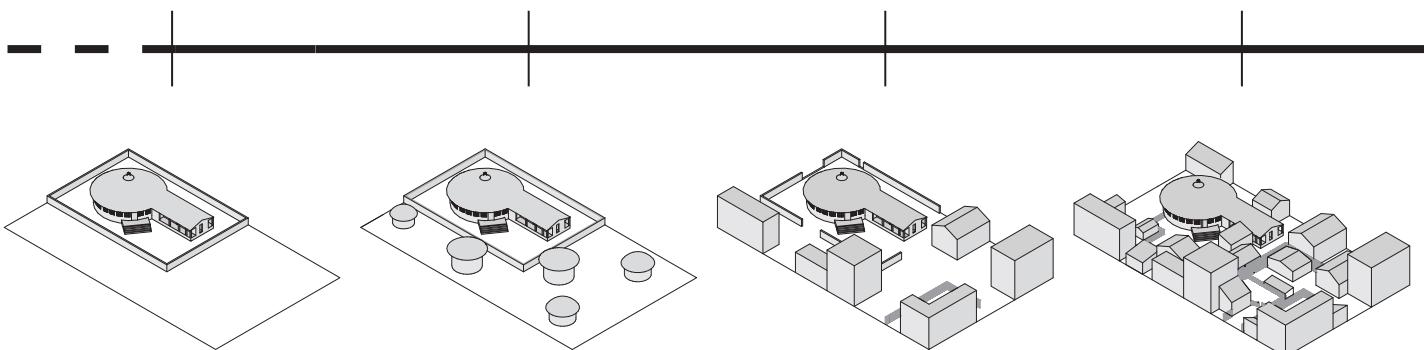
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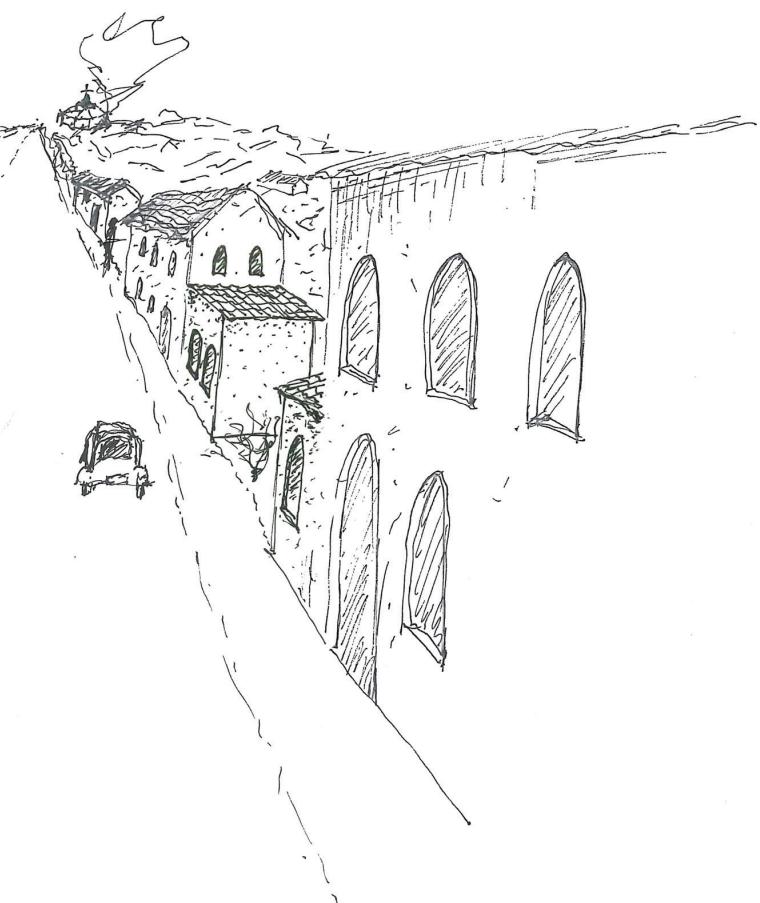
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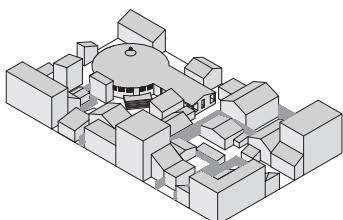




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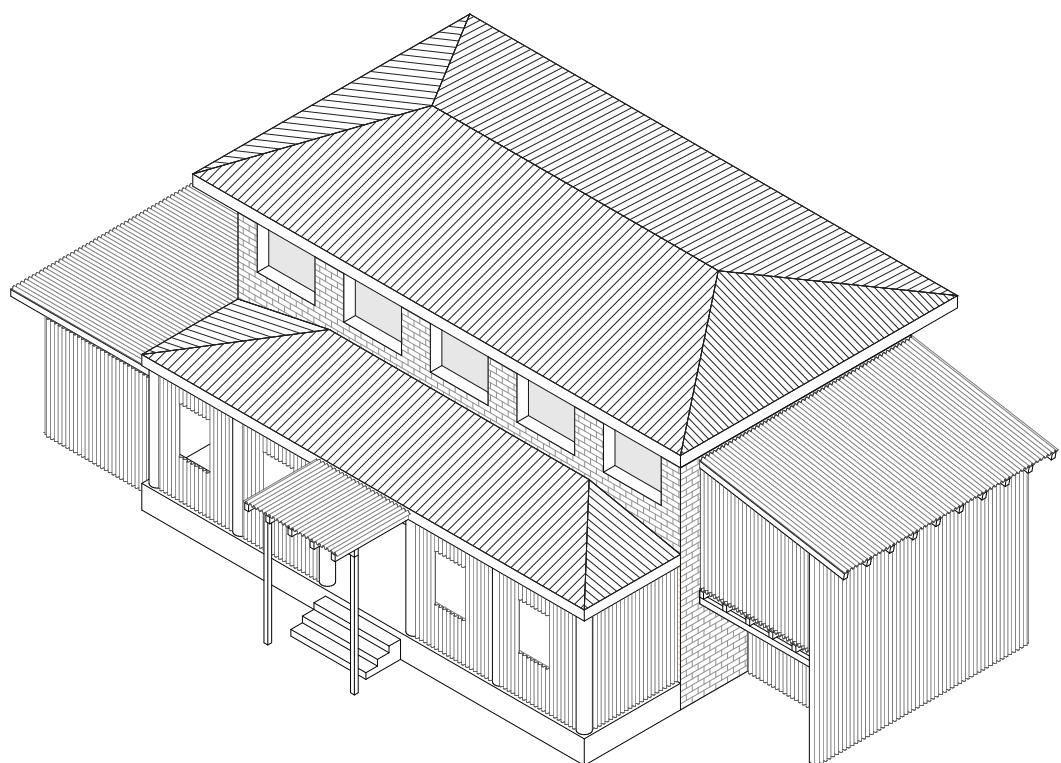
1991
fall of Derg regime

End of collectivization of the
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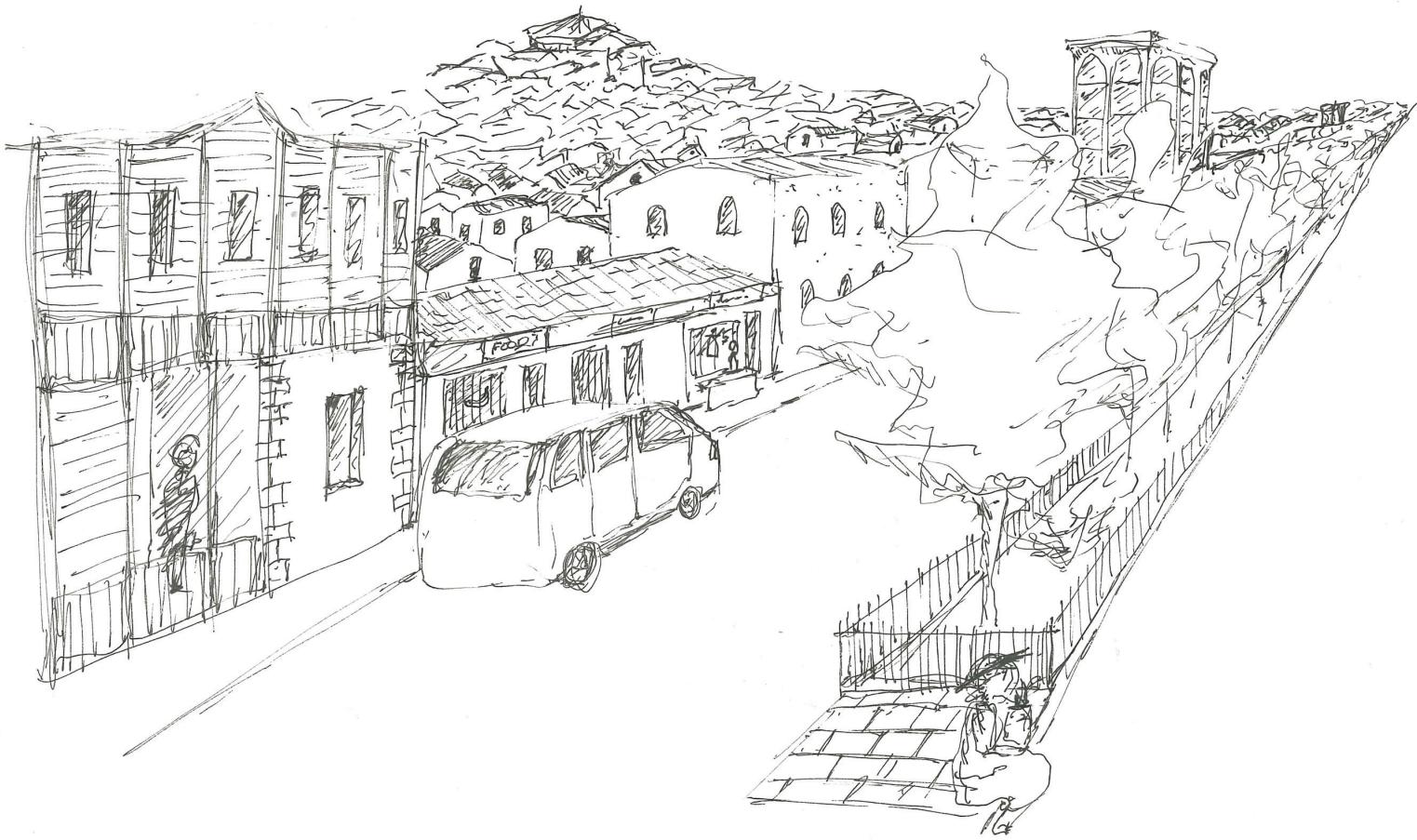




2005



FULL SATURATUON



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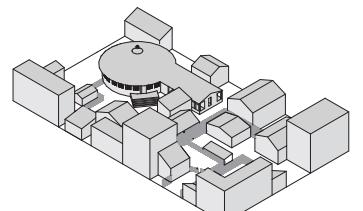
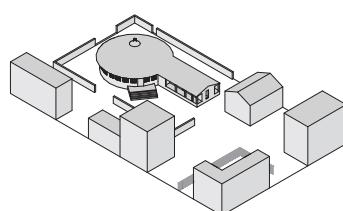
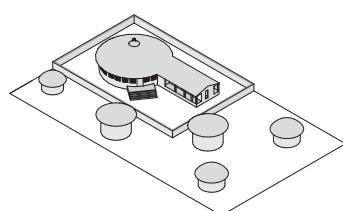
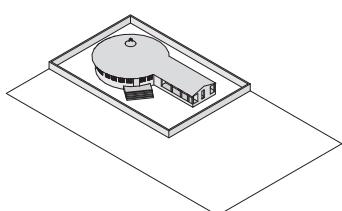
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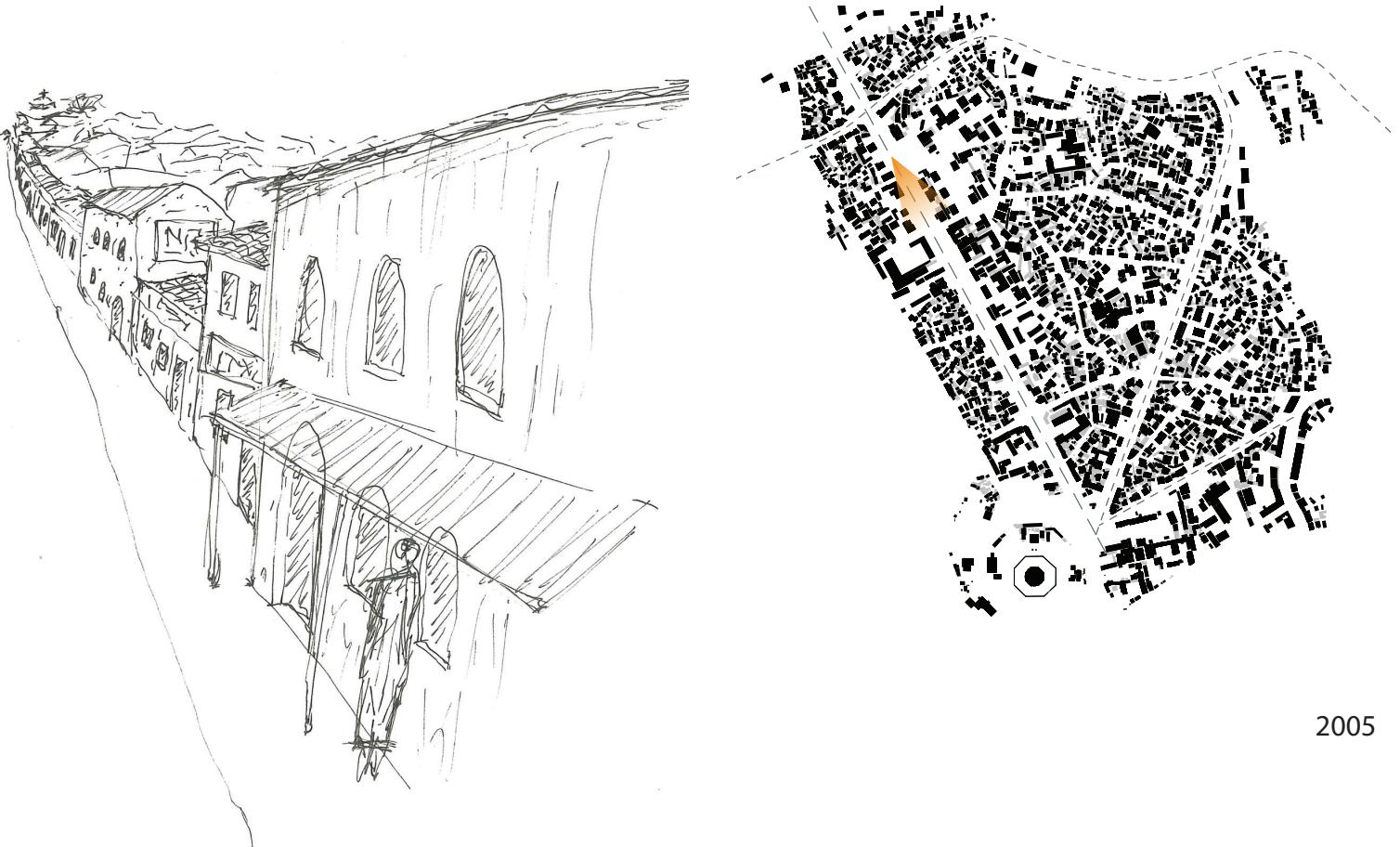
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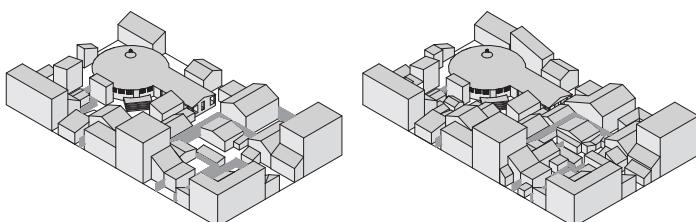


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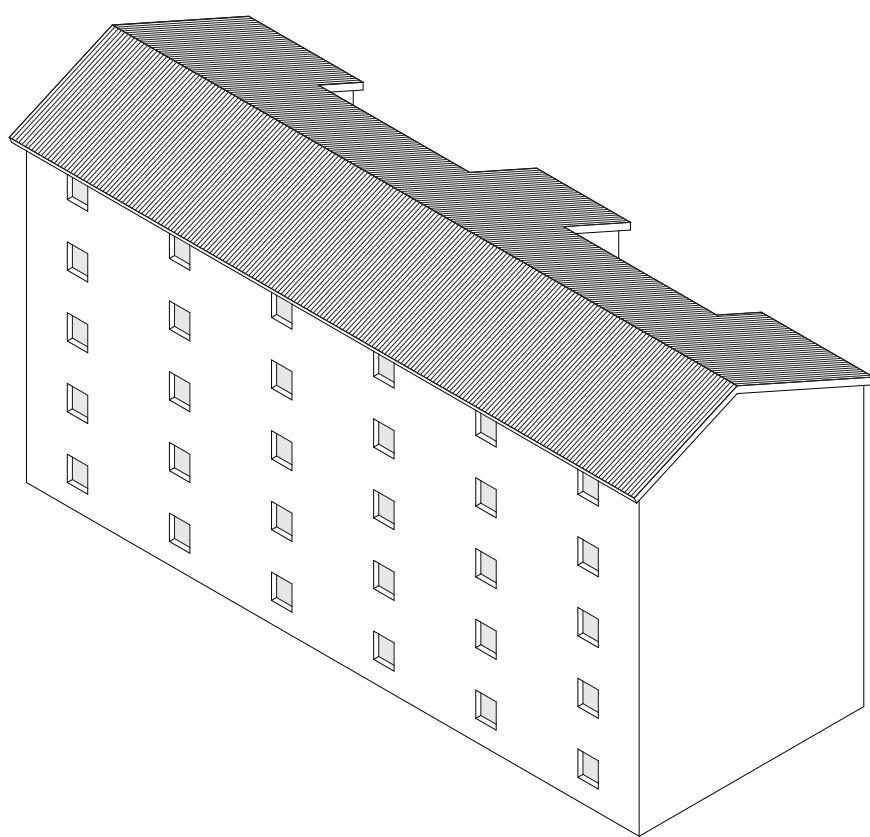
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condominium reform in Addis
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The informal settlement
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CONDOMINIUM



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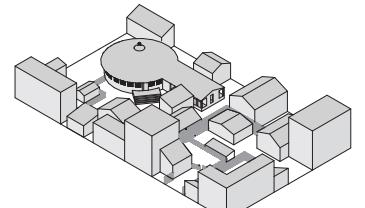
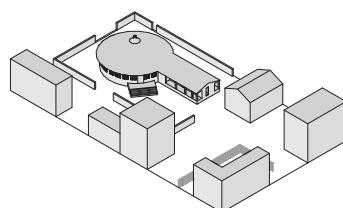
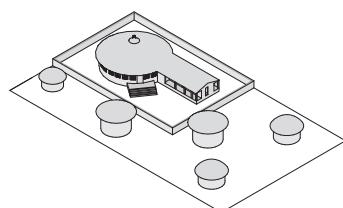
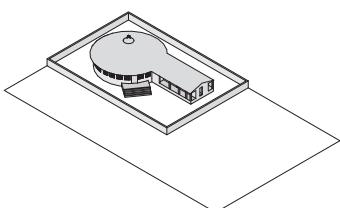
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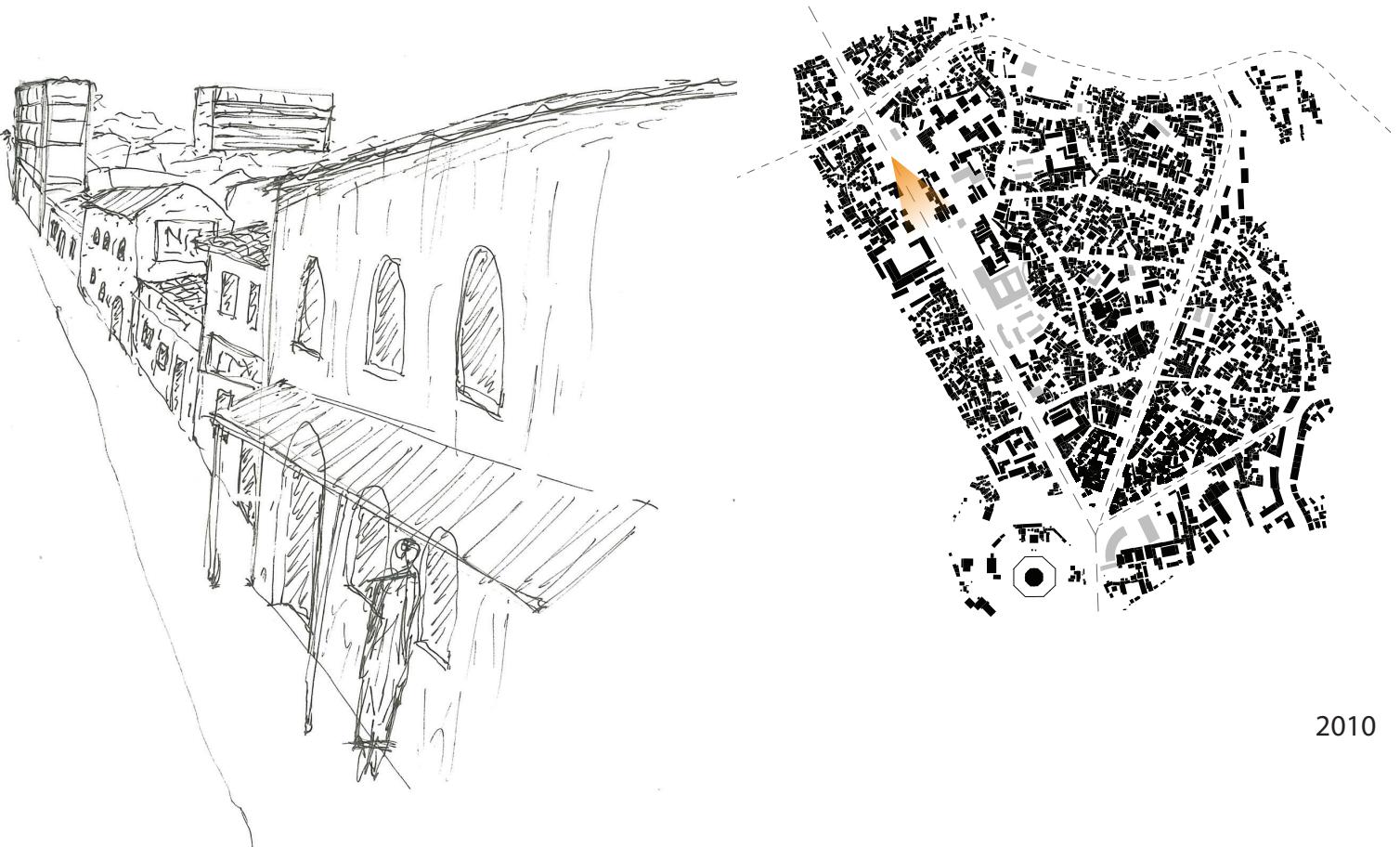
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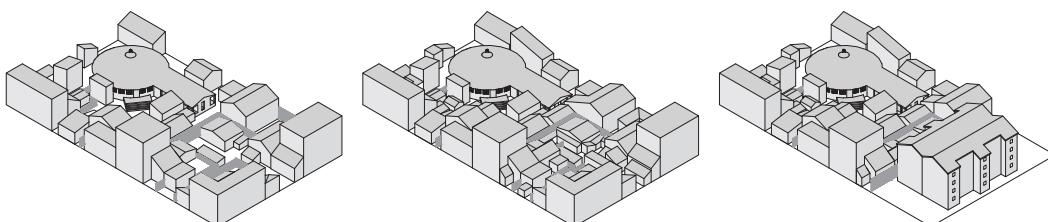
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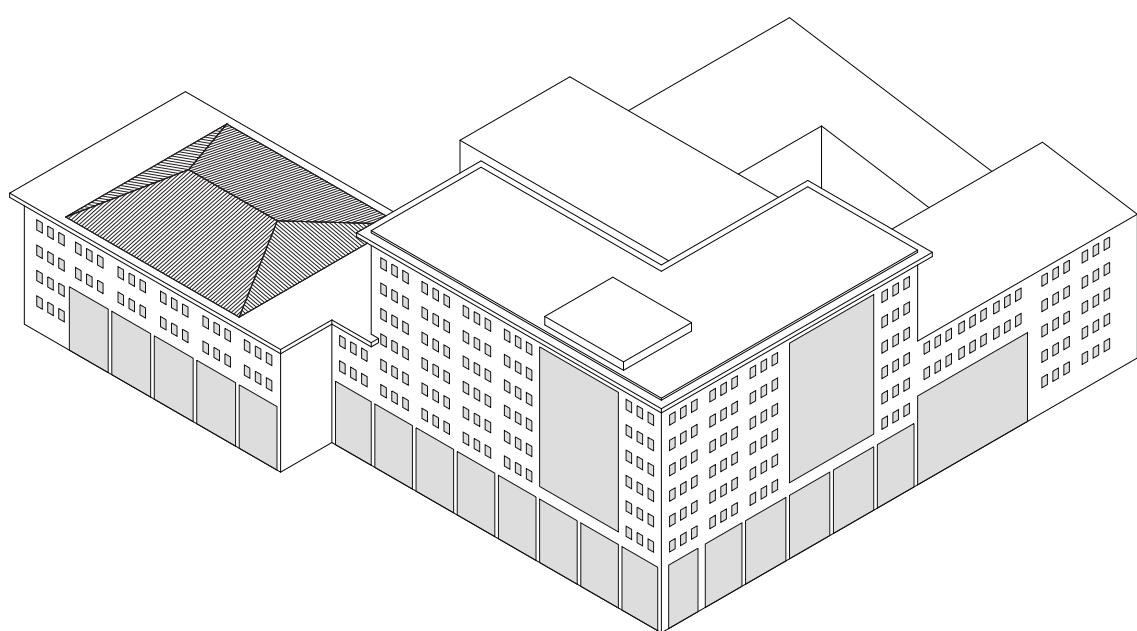
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Application of the masterplan
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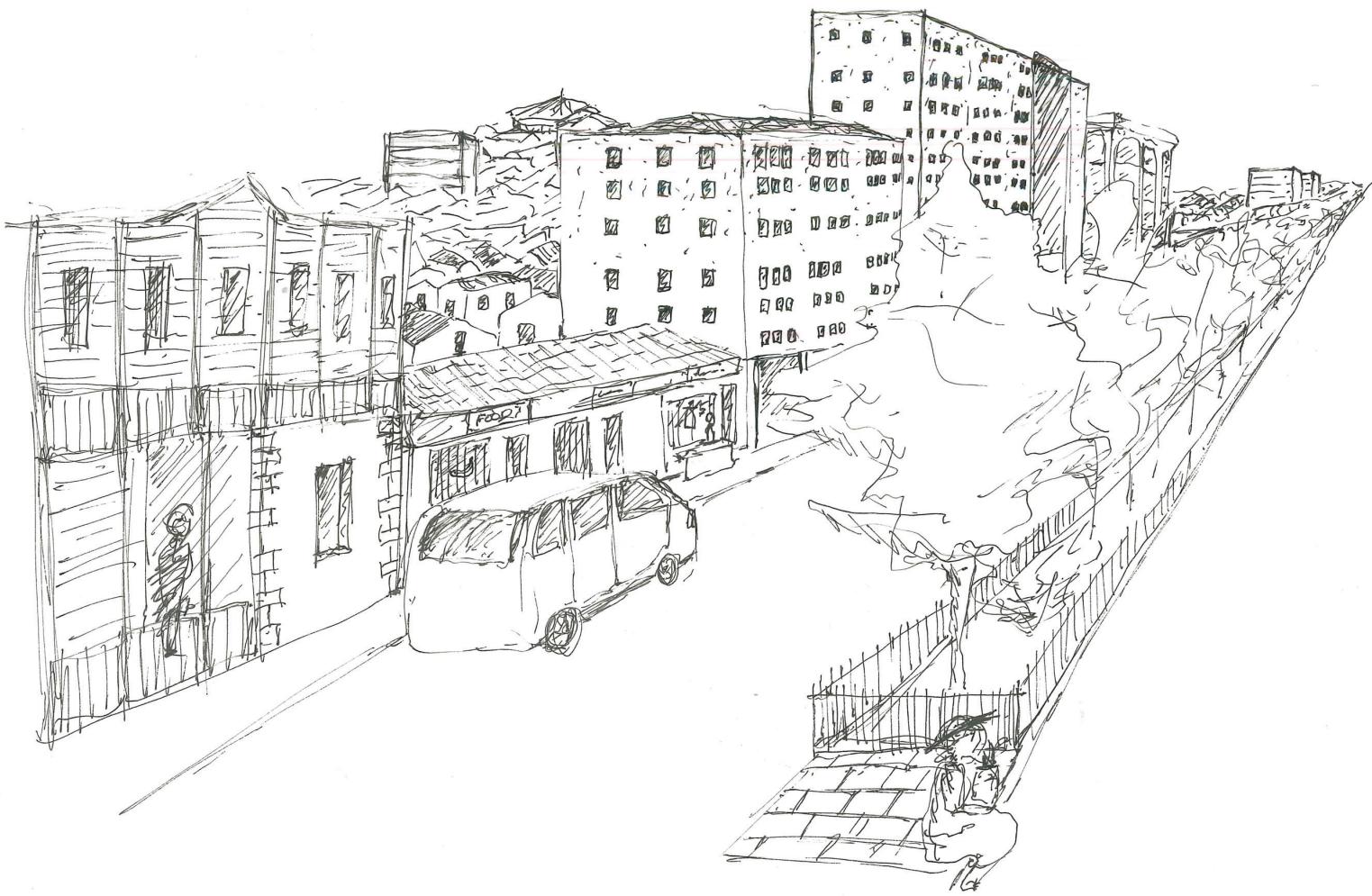




2016



PUBLIC BUILDINGS



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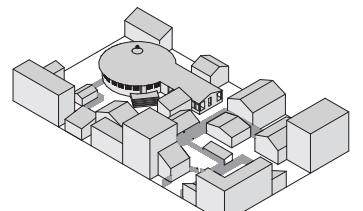
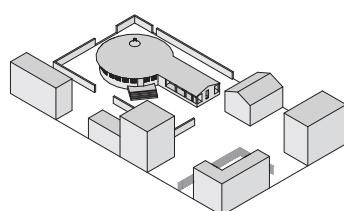
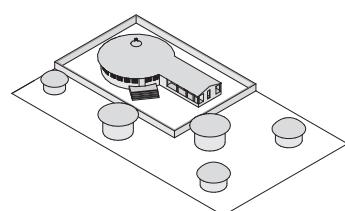
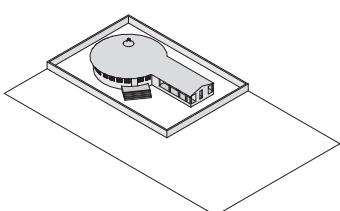
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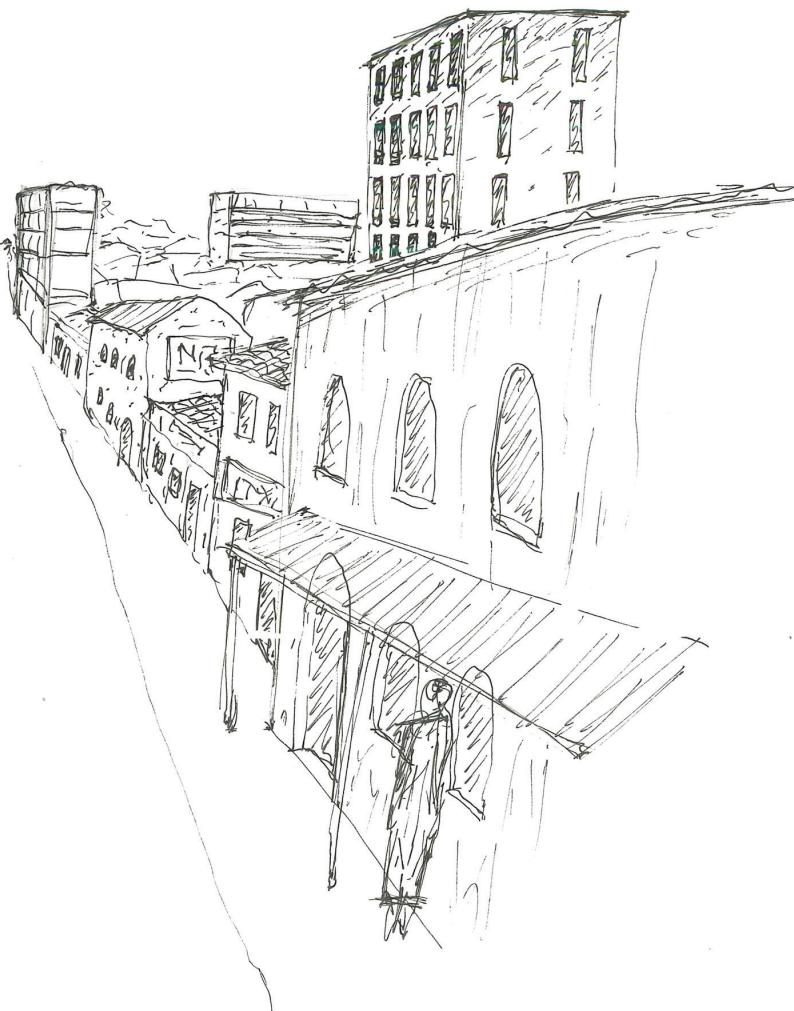
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2016

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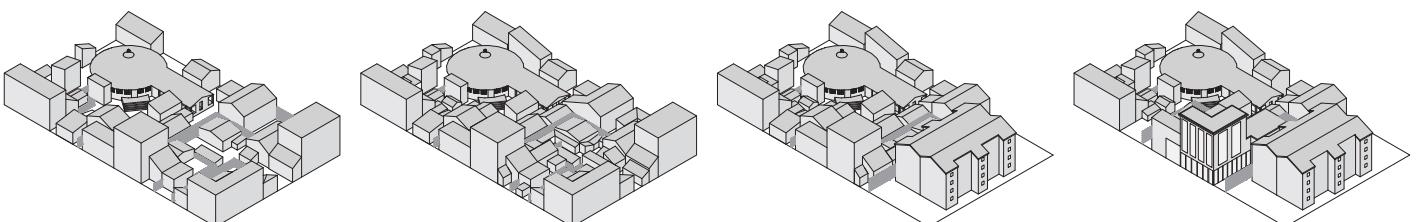
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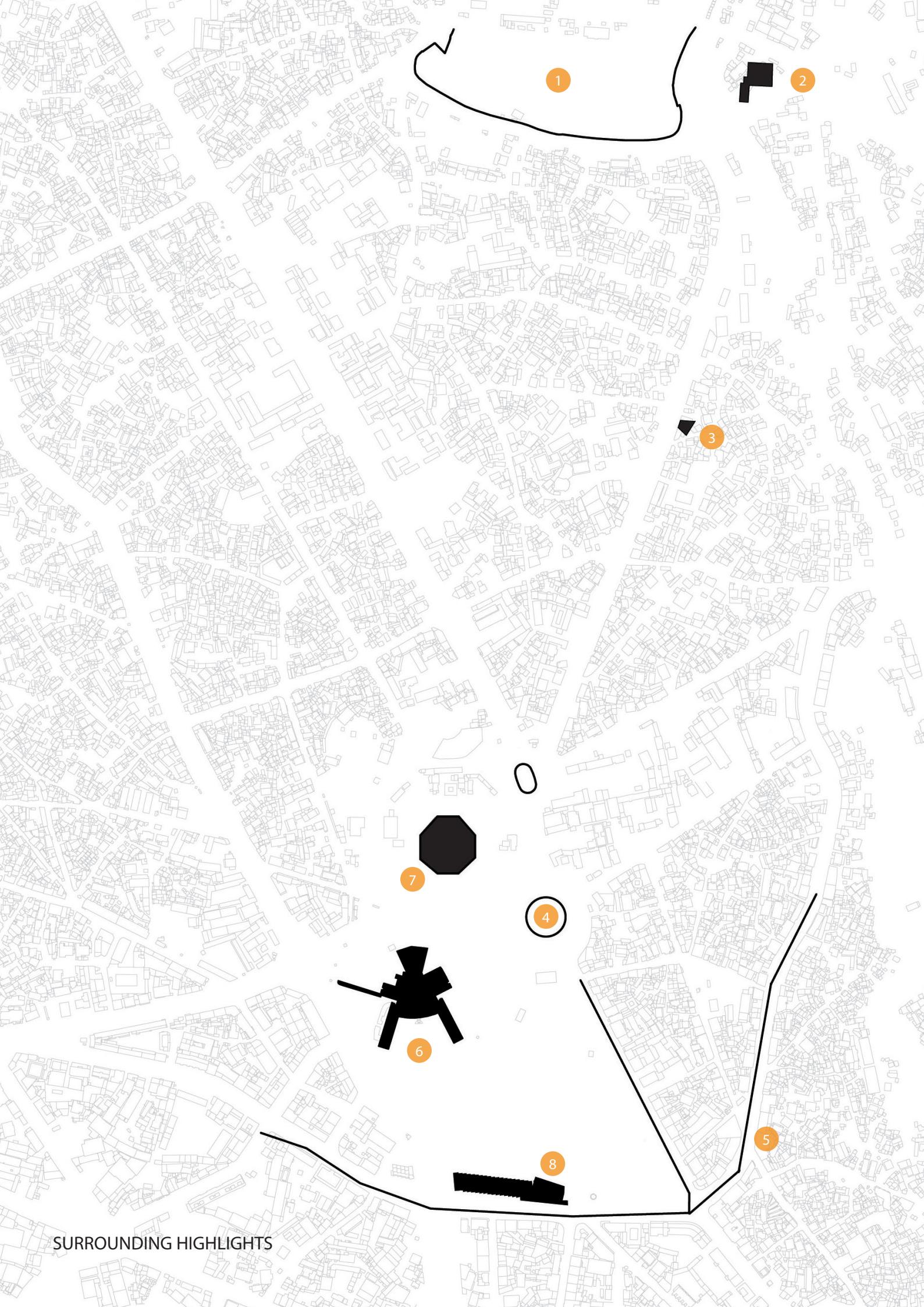
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Application of the masterplan derived by the IHDP: the first condominium blocks are built

2016
new public buildings

Construction of public facilities in the Dejach Wube sefer along the main street

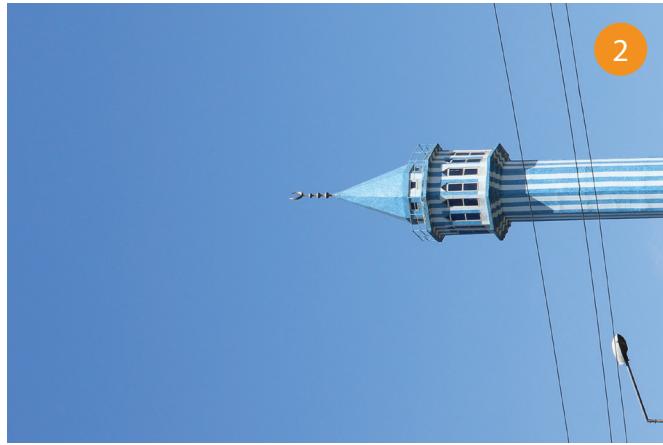




SURROUNDING HIGHLIGHTS



Park



Mosque



Bank



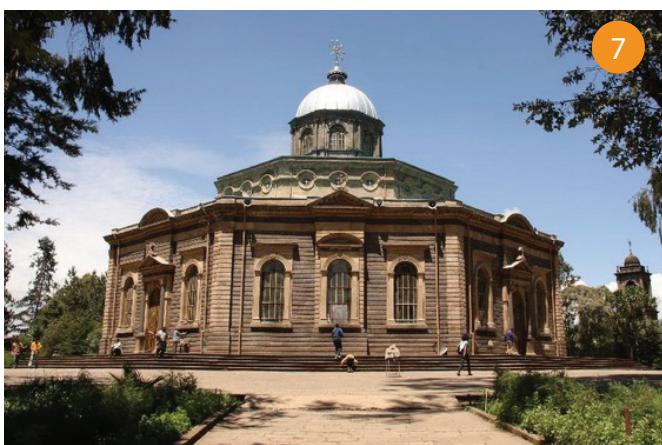
Menelik Square



Heile Selassie Street



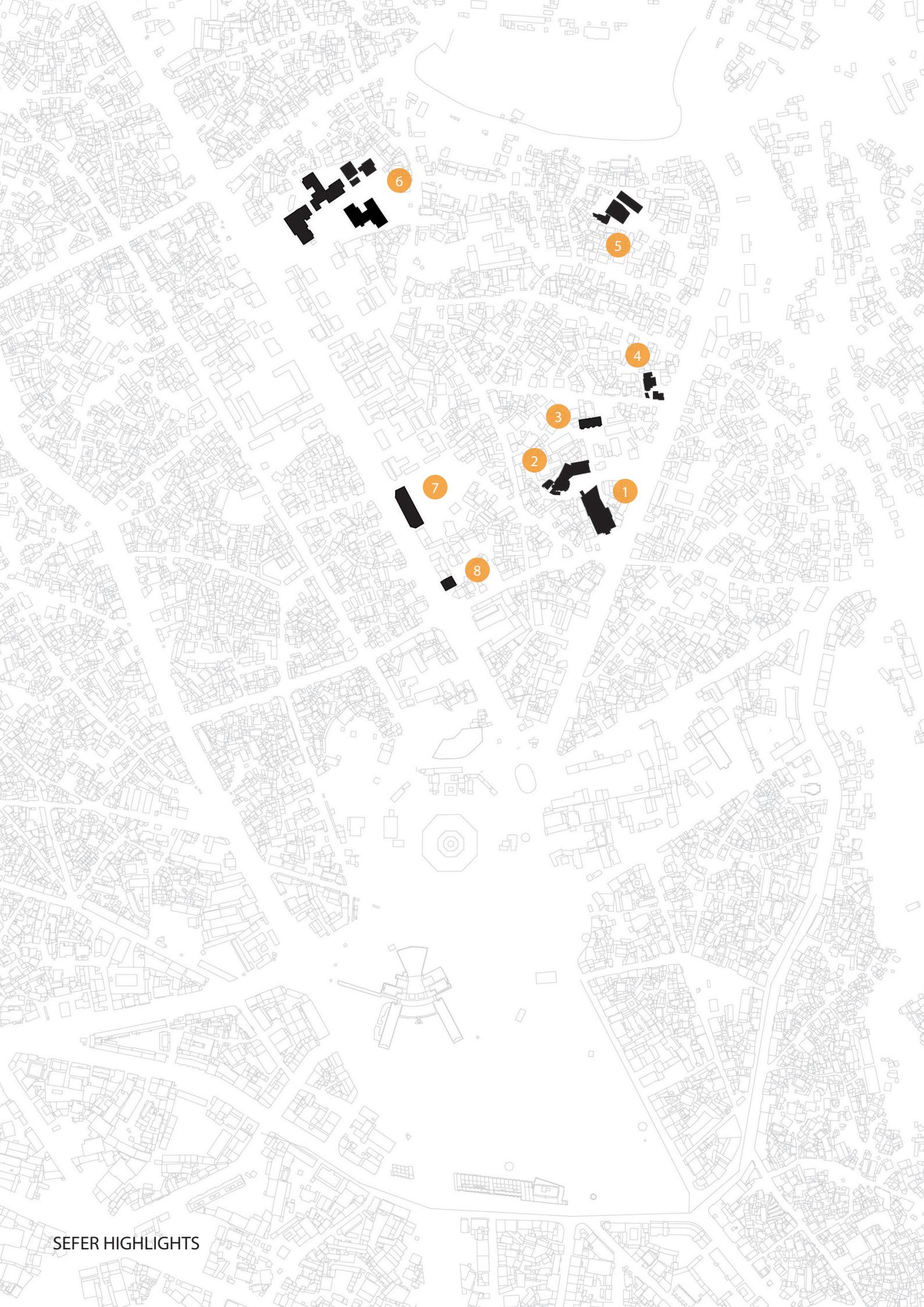
City Hall



St. George Cathedral



Shopping Mall



SEFER HIGHLIGHTS



Wood Workshop



Addis Ababa Restaurant



Regency Hotel



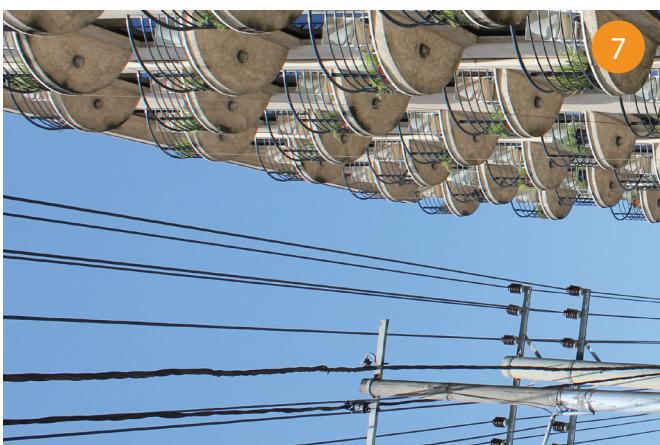
Iddir



Primary School



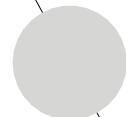
Italian Institute



Soramba Hotel



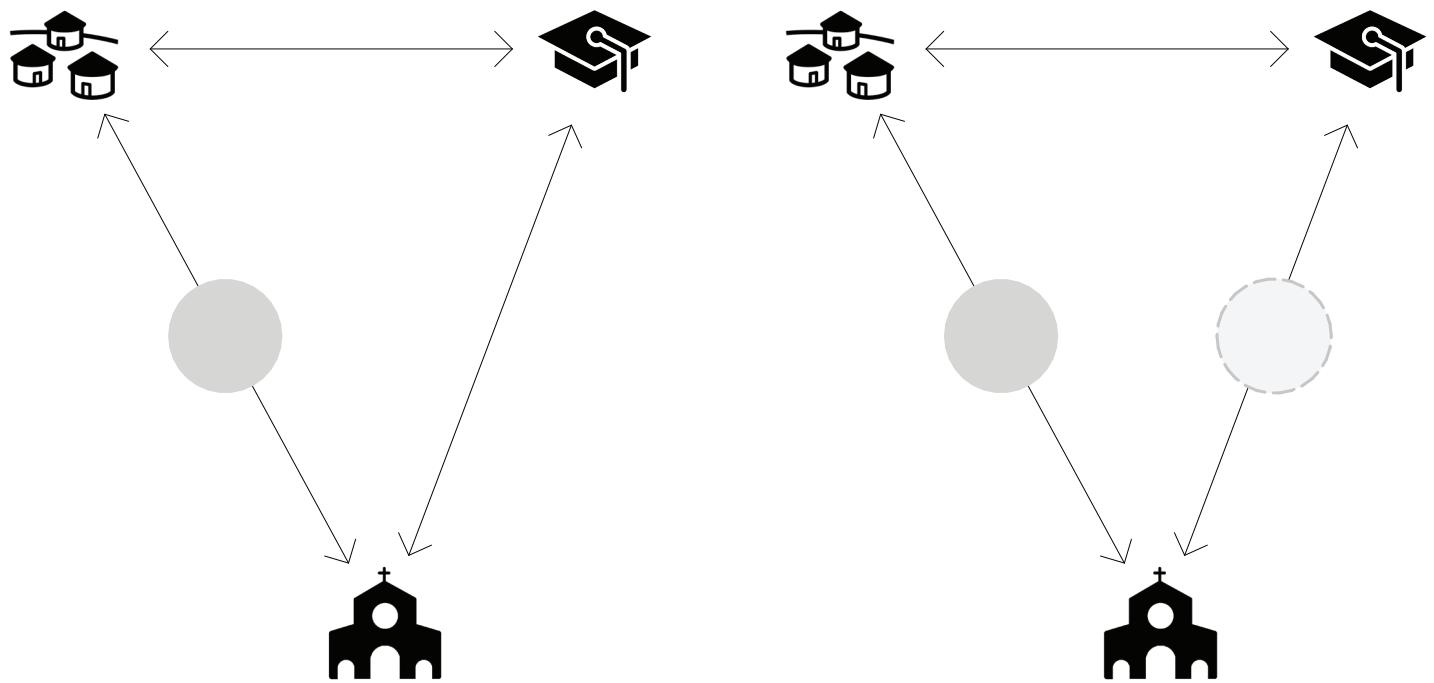
Medical School



1890

1970

HIERARCHY

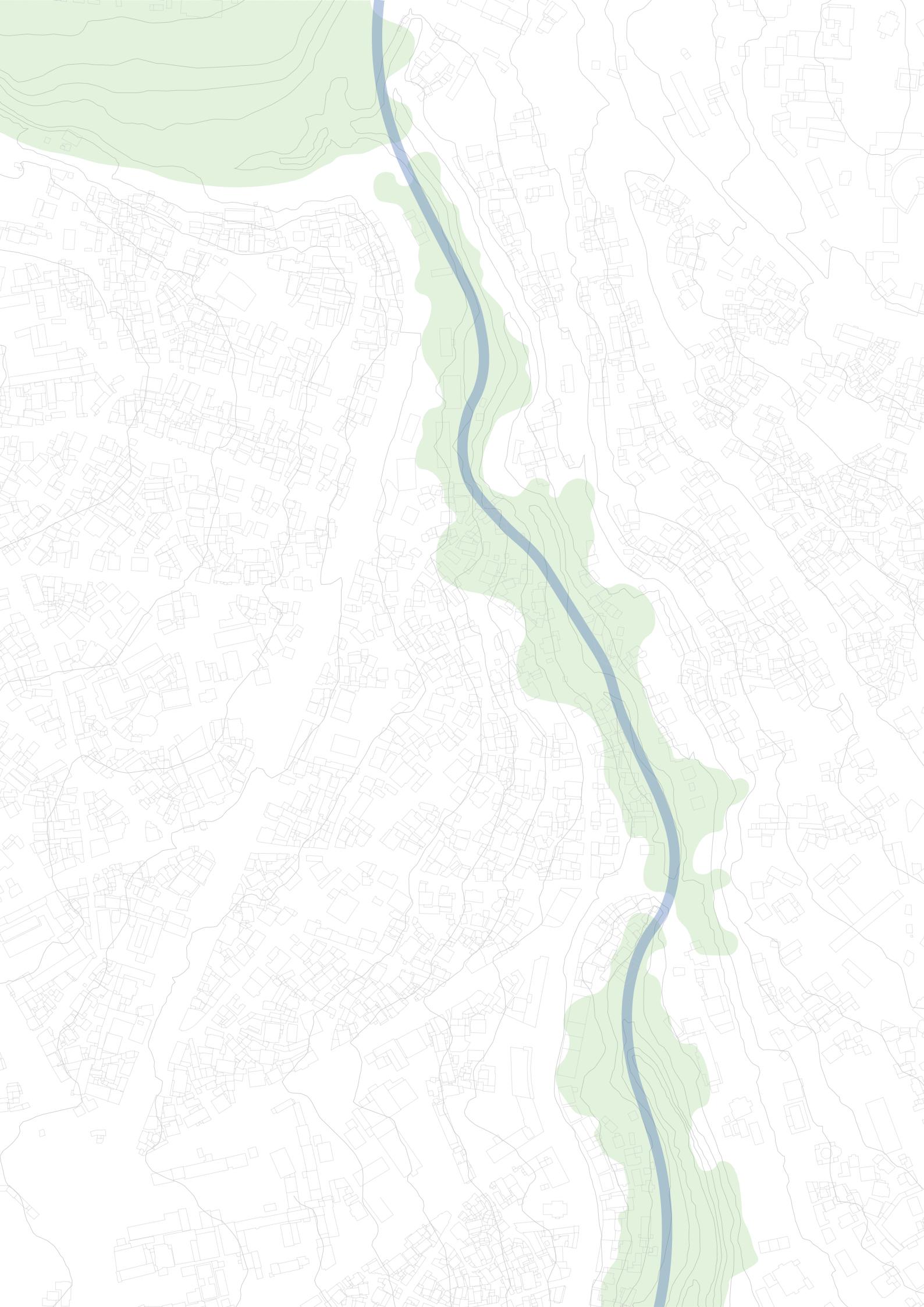


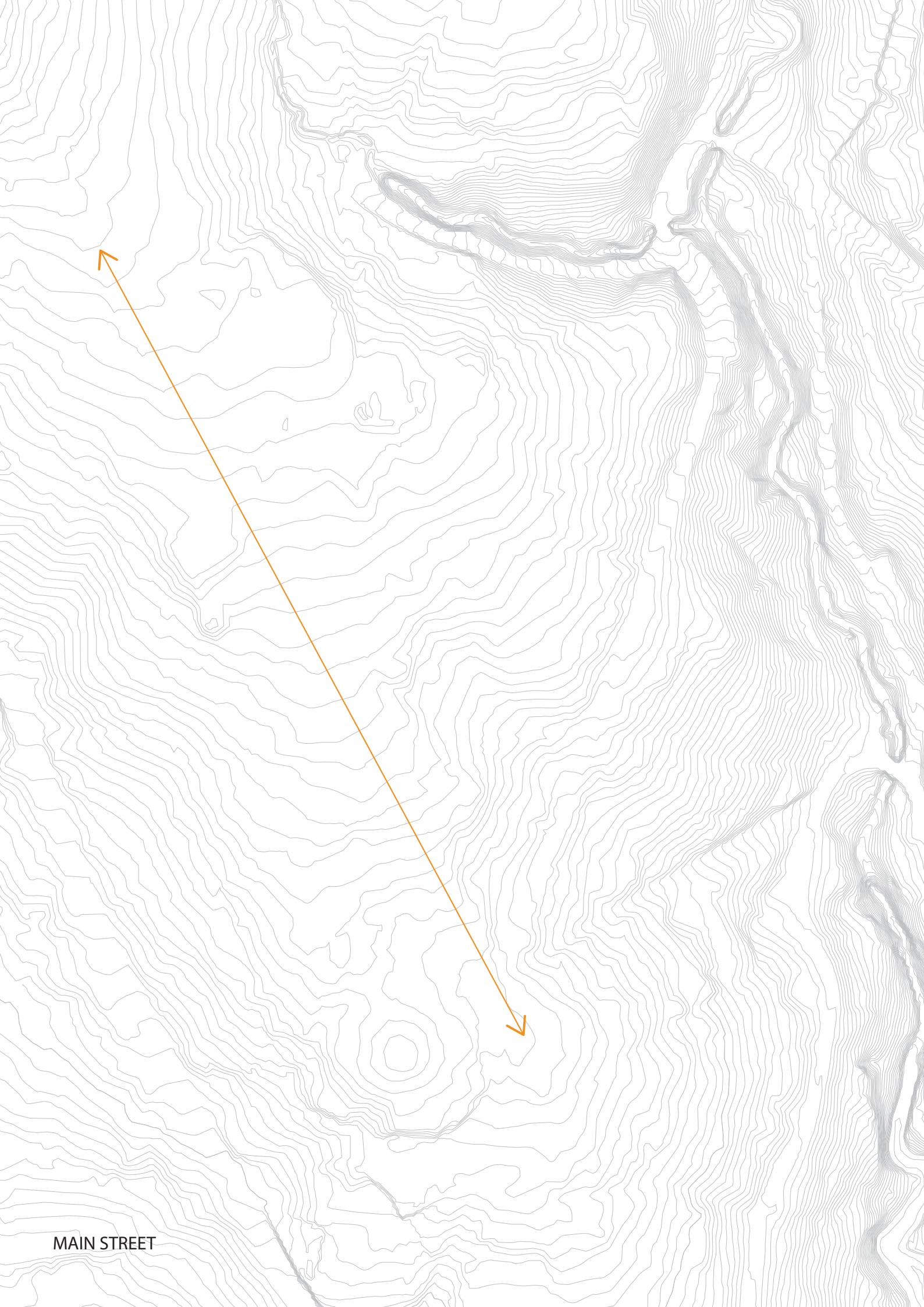
2016

2040

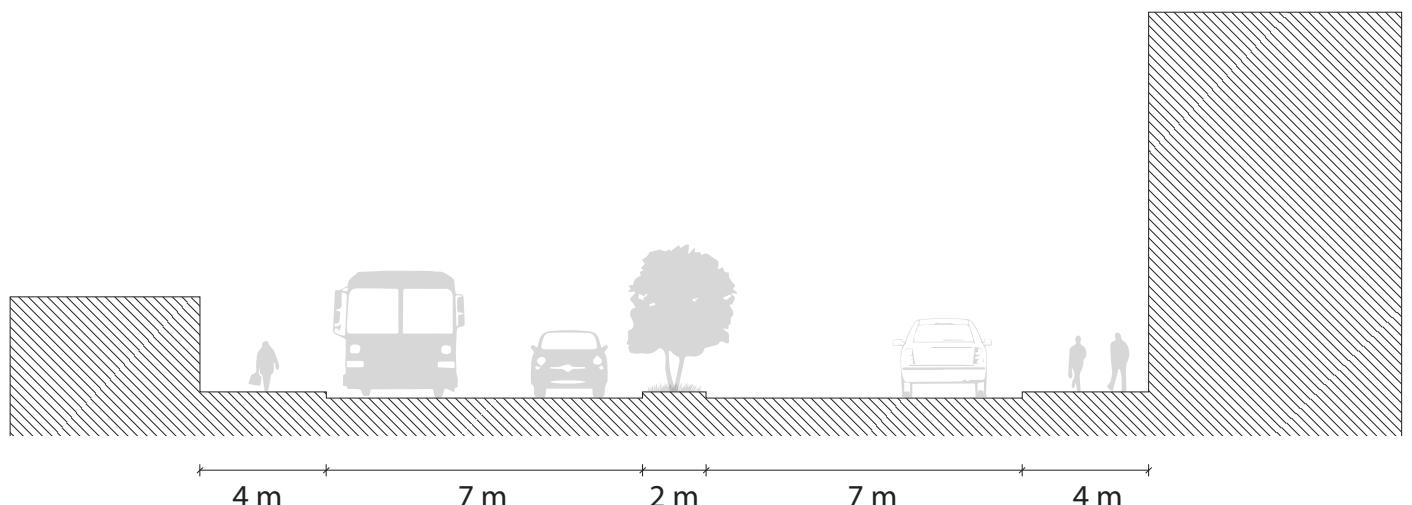


TOPOGRAPHY

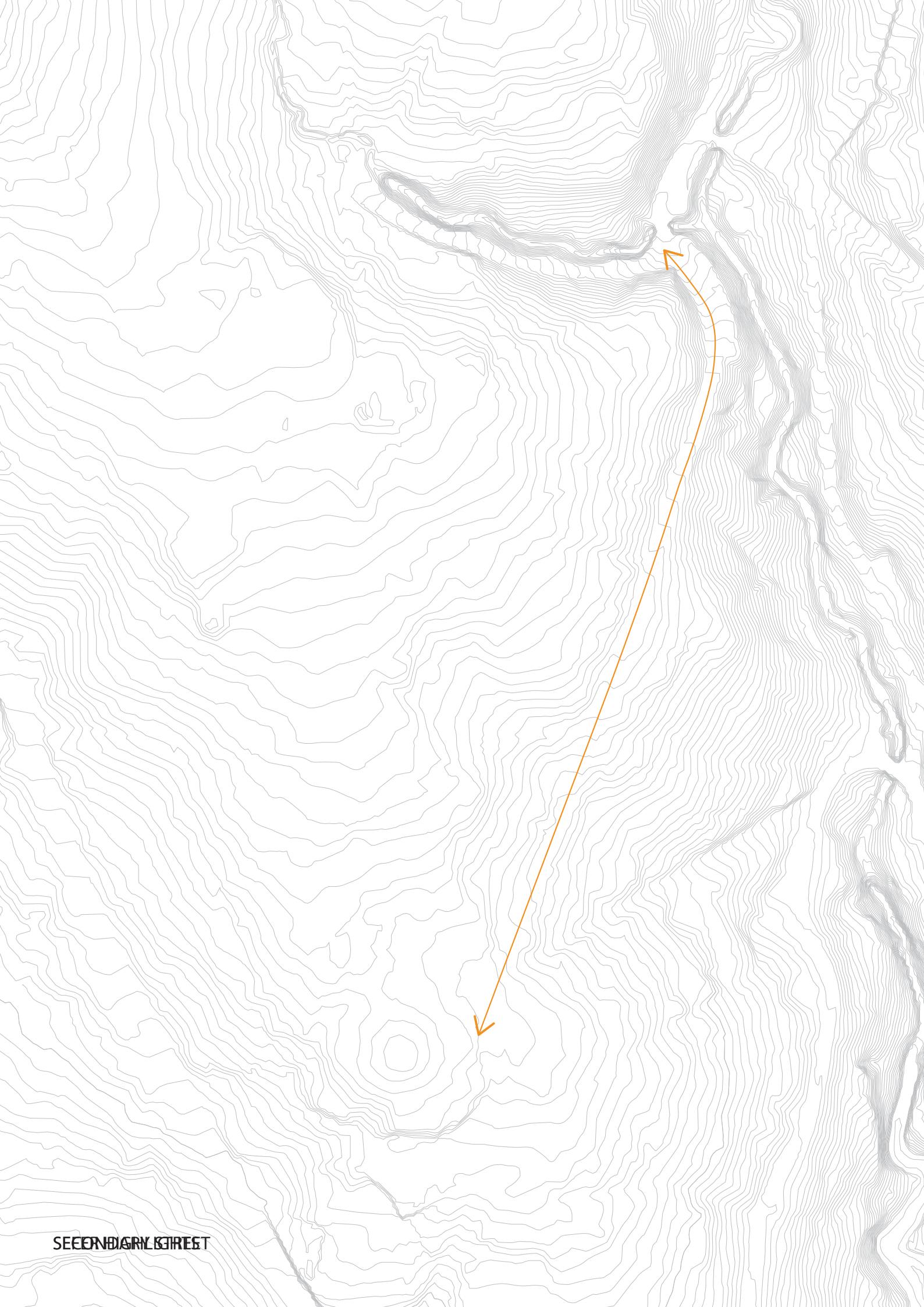




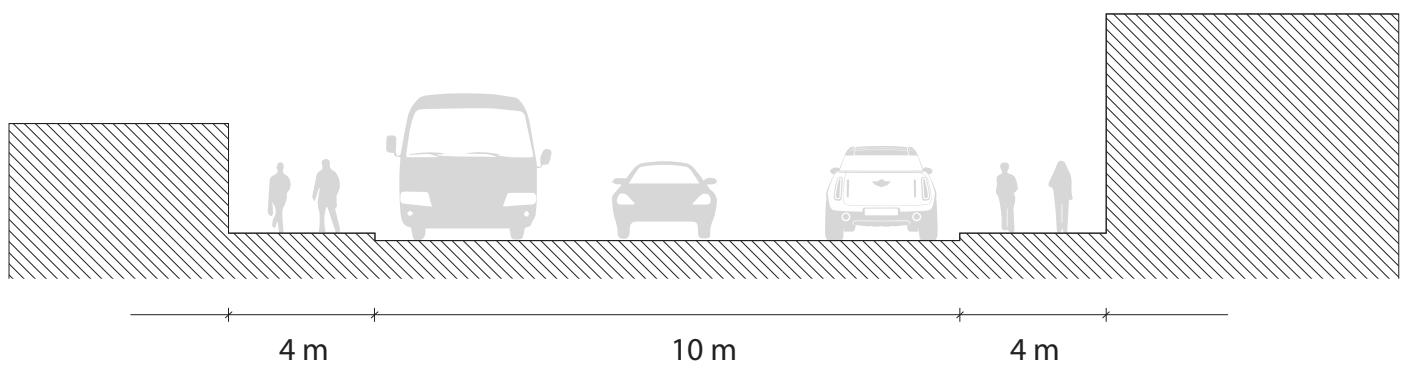
MAIN STREET



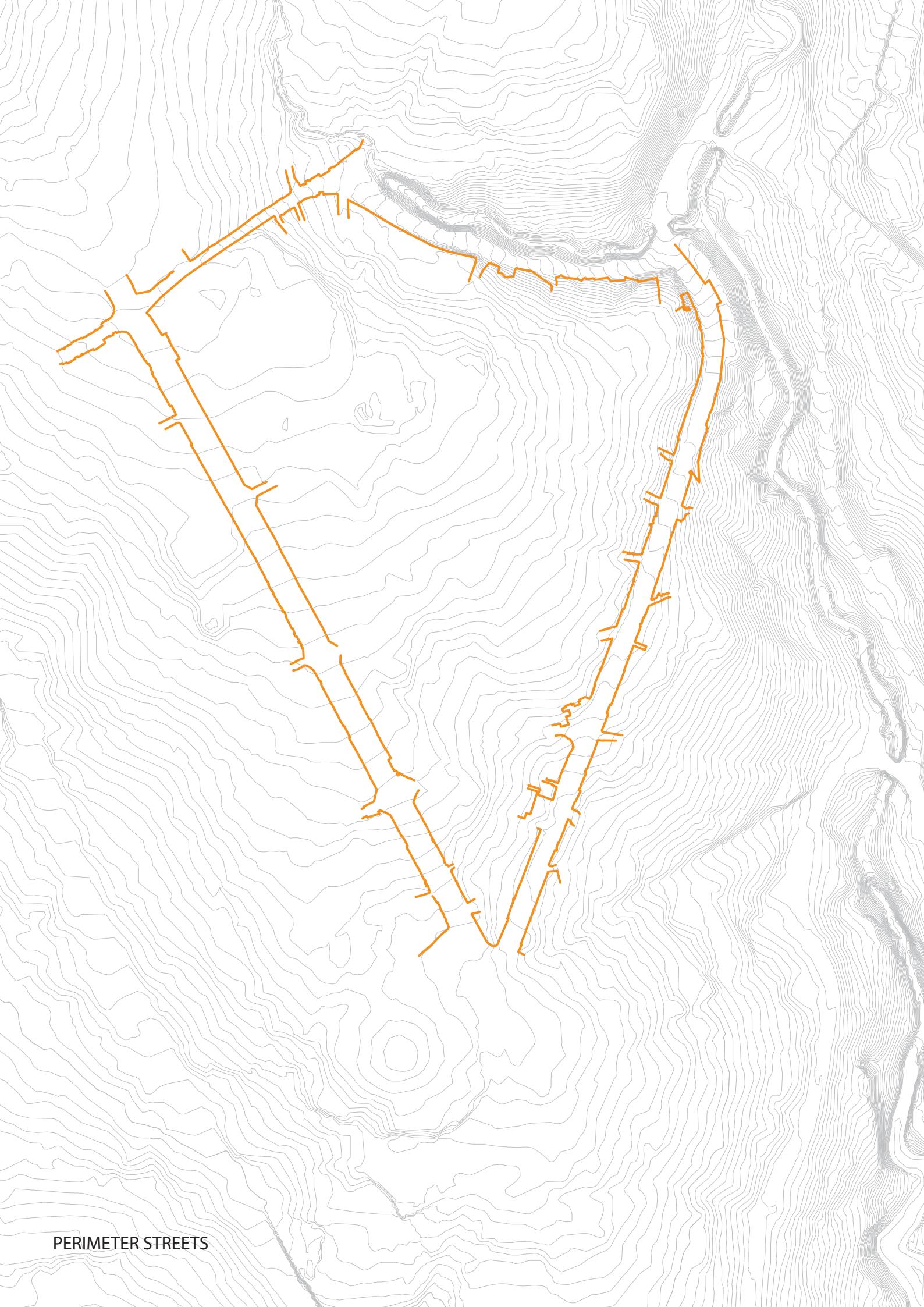
+28 m



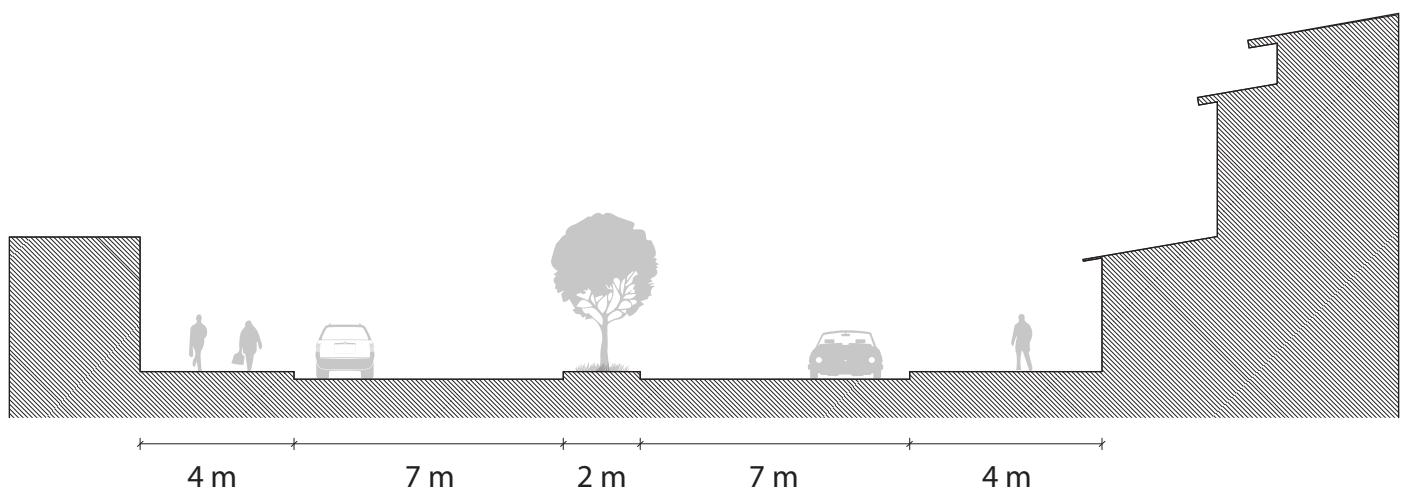
SECONDARY KEST

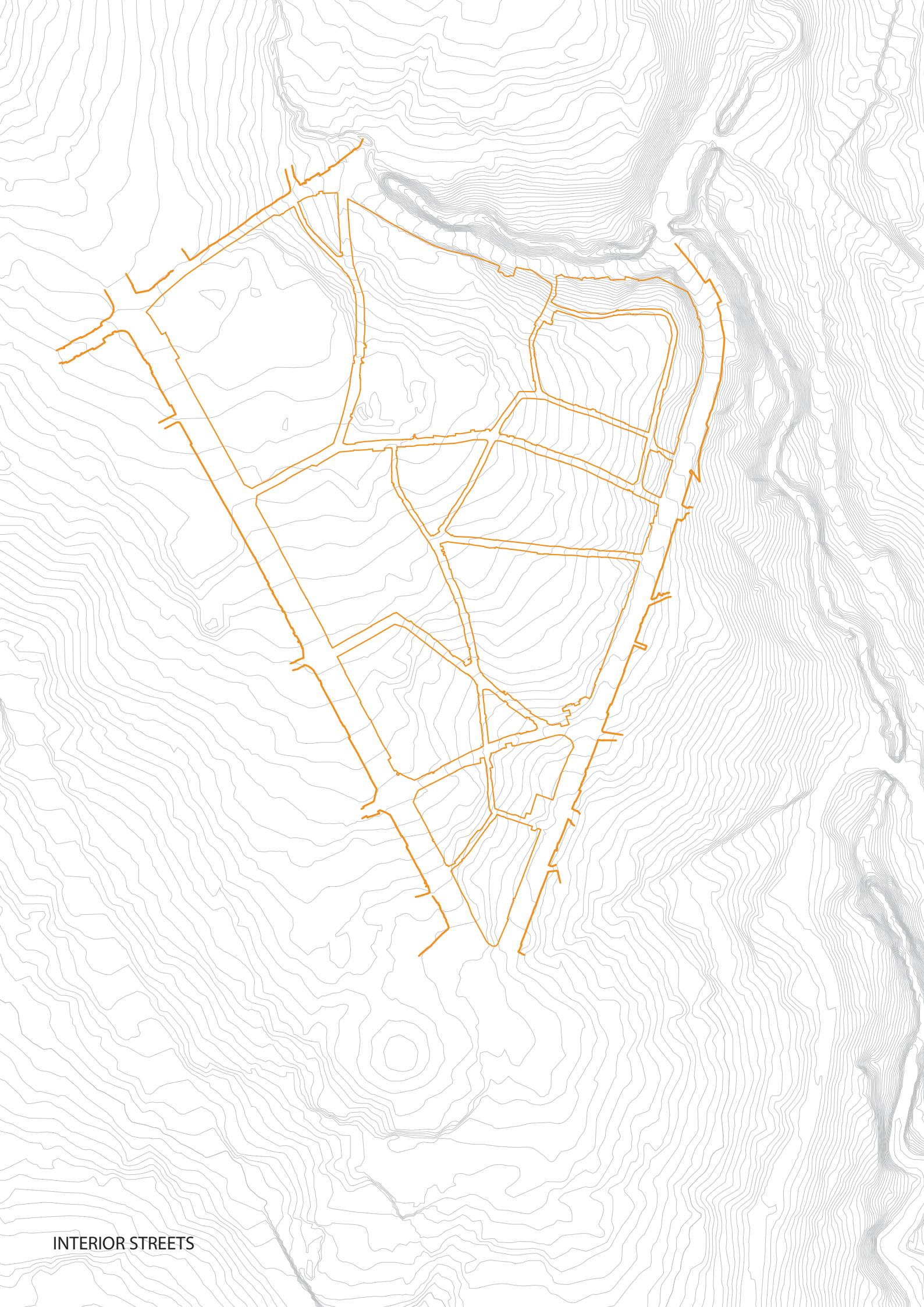


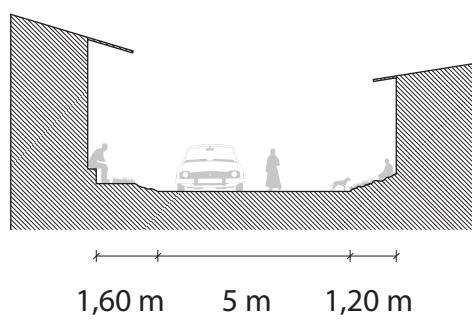
+13 m

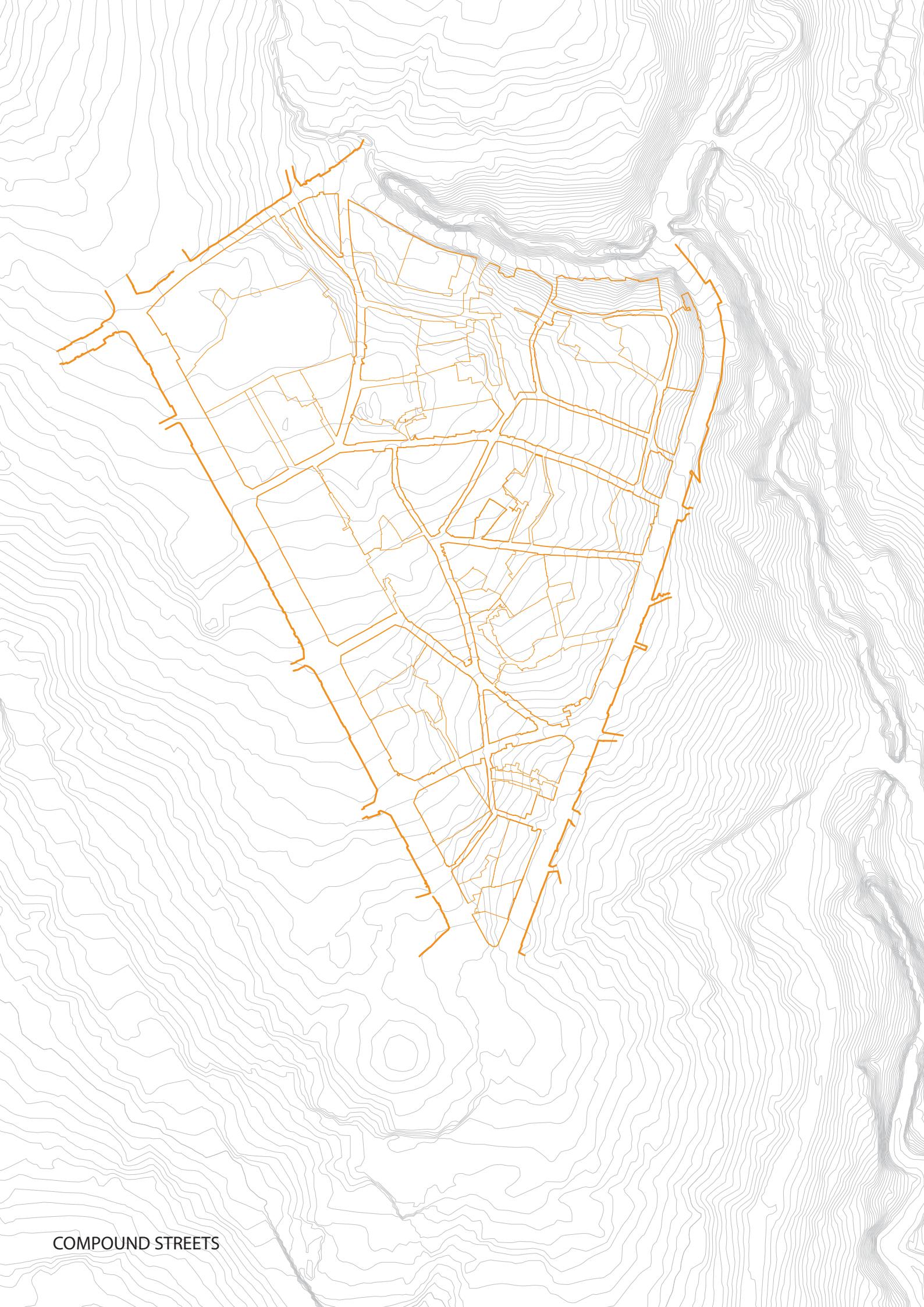


PERIMETER STREETS

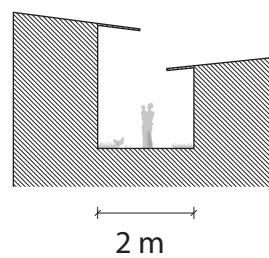








COMPOUND STREETS



COMPOUND OF 36 UNITS



The compound is situated in the southern part of the sefer and hosts around 36 units. The families who live here share the courtyard compound for activities like drying herbs, doing the laundry, cooking, drinking coffee, playing children and for events like weddings and funerals.

Because of the fact that the dwellings are small and the weather in Addis makes it possible to spend many hours outdoors the courtyard becomes a very important living space for these families. For the everyday life activities which take place in the courtyard the people share much of their household items.

Due to the importance of the common courtyard and the fact that the people share many things, the social network in these kind of compound is really strong. Also the families help each other out with babysitting the children. Most of the families live in this compound for over 30 years.



Location sefer



Zoom in compound

EX CHEF ADDIS ABABA RESTAURANT



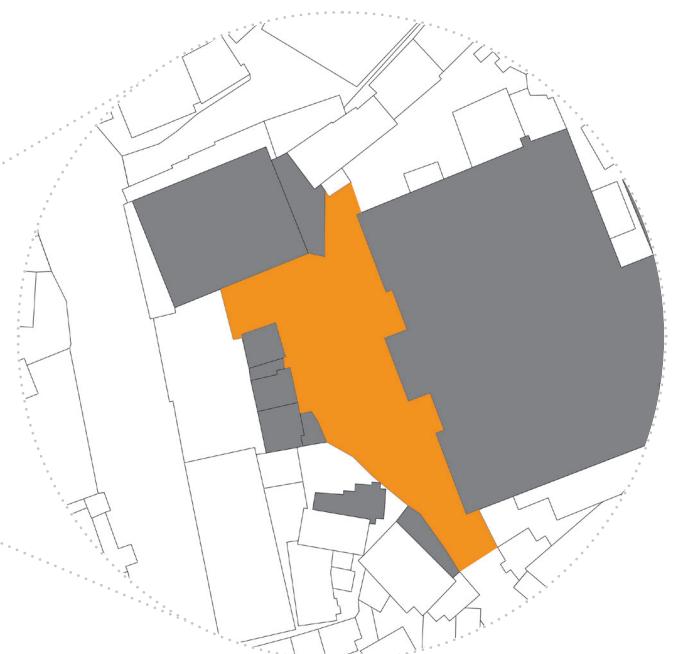
The house of this family is situated opposite of the leather factory and very close to the former Ras Palace, which now hosts the Addis Ababa restaurant.

They live together with four generations of the family, among which the grandmother is the oldest. The daughter of her, mother of the third generation, was ten years ago the chef in the Addis Ababa restaurant for a long time. The house with the facade of corrugated metal sheet is already there for over 50 years.

This household uses the space in front of their house for many activities. The space is shared with some other dwellings and the leather factory, this building was part of the historical Ras Palace. Even so the space is an open public space it also feels at the same time as a residential space.



Location sefer



Zoom in compound

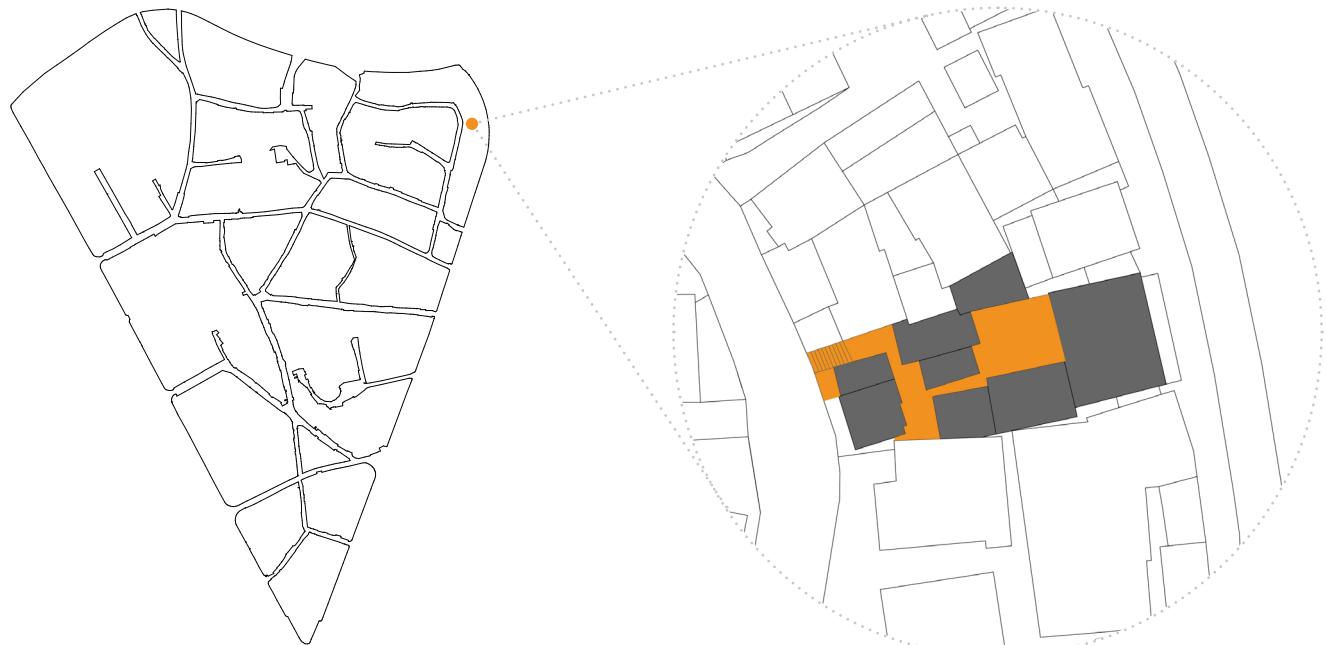
HALF ITALIAN LADY



The house of this half Italian woman is situated in the north east part of the sefer. Entering the compound one has to pass a gate which is formed by a large vegetation wall. The women lives here with 6 people in one unit of more or less 20 square meters. The compound is again shared with several other families.

In her living room a striking thing are the portraits of her children on the wall. Her eldest son is a doctor, one daughter is a nurse and the other daughter is married and now lives in the United States.

Within this living space it becomes clear that these families are not necessarily "the poorest of the poor", but invest a big part of their money in order to pay for the education of their children. Even though the life conditions are low, the sacrifice is worthed in order to ensure a better future her children.



Location sefer

Zoom in compound

MAN IN KOREA COMPOUND

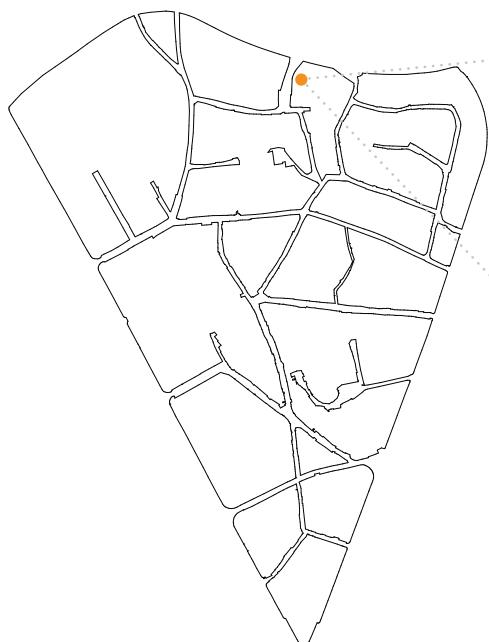


The households present in this compound vary between 3 and 8 persons. Because of the high rate of diseases this compound was used to be called "Colera"; after the improvement of the sanitary condition, the compound changed its name into "Korea". The interviewed stated that his compound in future will be replaced with an extension of the existing park on the other side of the road.

According to the survey, there are several problems in the compound: first of all the lack of toilet facilities and tap water (they are forced, in fact, to move to the sefer on the opposite side of the road to buy the water).

Another issue that the households here have to face relates to the floods: this problem derives both from the natural topography of the soil (really steep), both due to the lack of ditches and drainage systems.

The person interviewed has been living here since 36 years. Initially the soil of this compound was private, then nationalized under the Derg regime and eventually granted to the inhabitants.



Location sefer



Zoom in compound



ACTIVITIES ON THE STREETS



 high activity level



 medium activity level

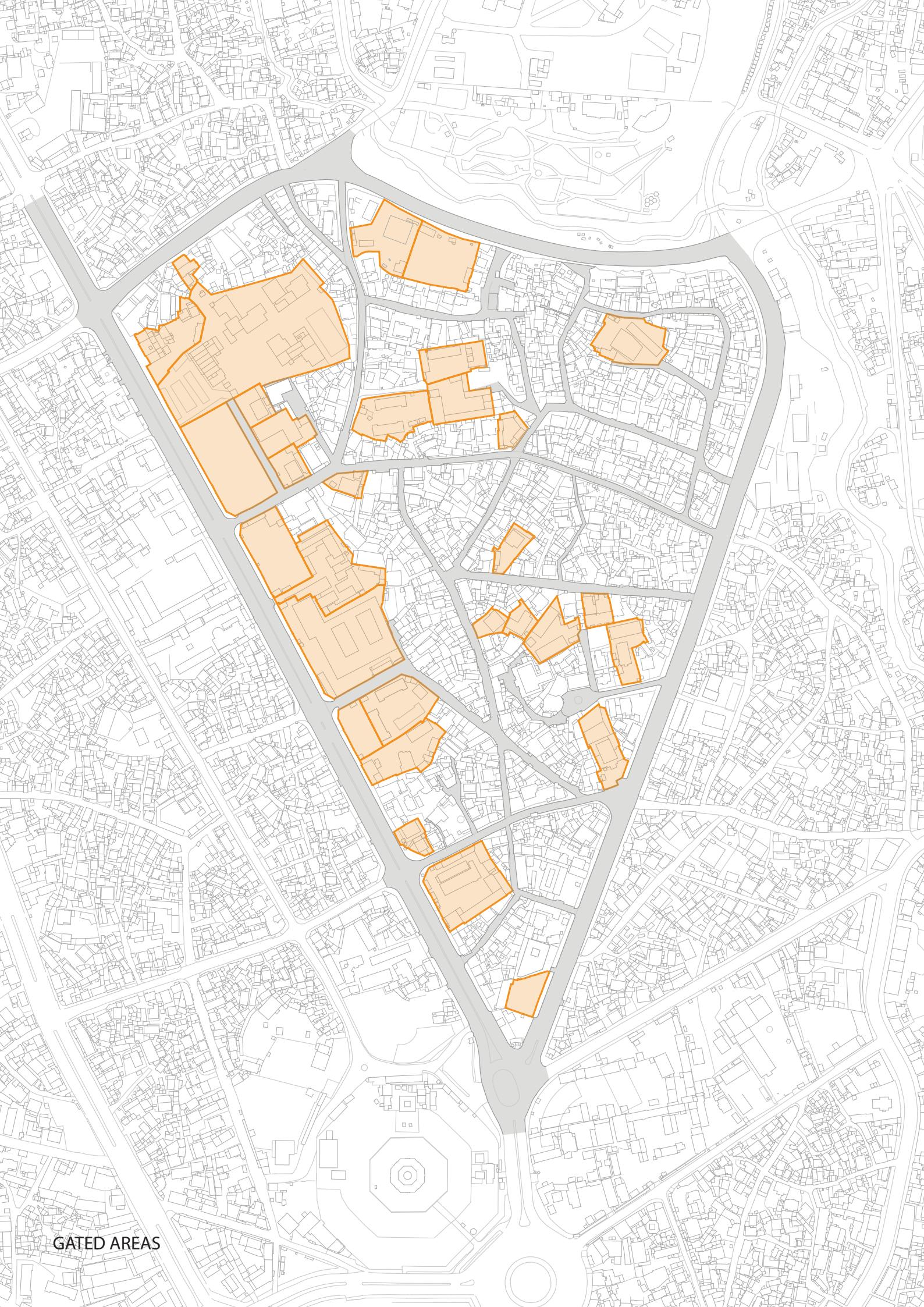


 low activity level

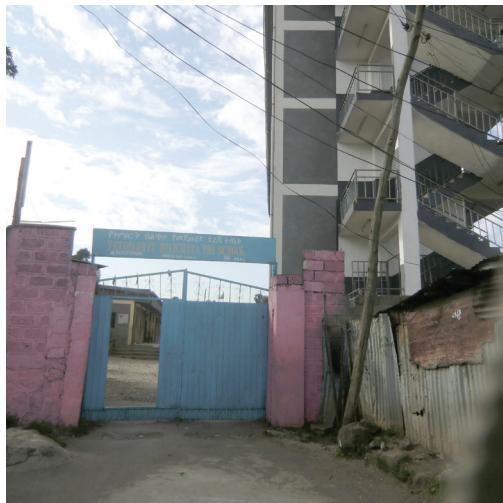




accessible space



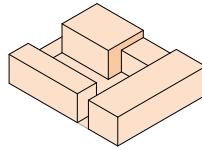
GATED AREAS



gated function

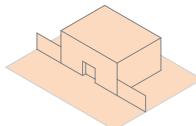


BUILDING TYPOLOGIES



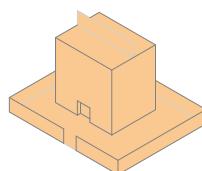
INFORMAL COMPOUND

The compound is the core of the informal communal life.
The spontaneous aggregation around a same open space is its DNA.



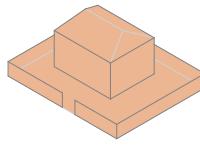
SHOP

Usually facing the main streets, the shop can be considered a varied commercial typology: it is mainly related to food, beverage, and manufacturer sale



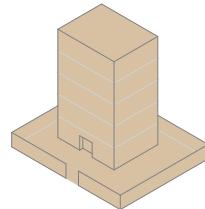
GATED FUNCTIONS

In the sefer specific activities are strongly bounded for security/privateness reasons: police station, hotels and schools can be considered as such.



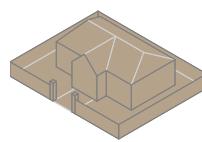
VILLA

The "Villa" is an isolated single family house surrounded by a wall. According to their structures and finishings can be distinguished as traditional or modern.



CONDOMINIUM BLOCK

Condominium blocks are one of the main proofs of the hectic building development in Addis Ababa. G+4 typology is the one currently present in the sefer.

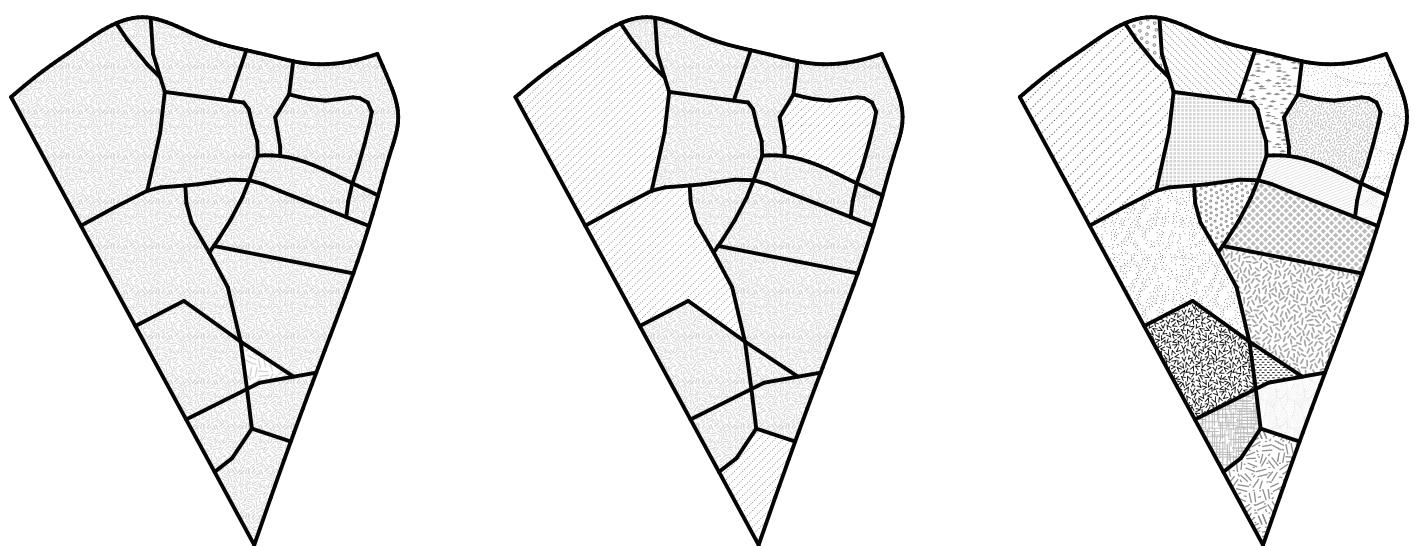


RAS PALACE

The Ras Palace was the symbol of the emperor's power, usually placed in the highest part of the areas in order to have a total control on the surrounding.



BORDERS

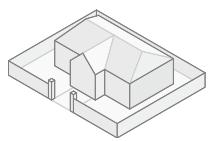
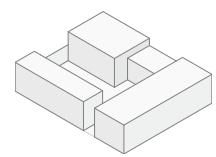
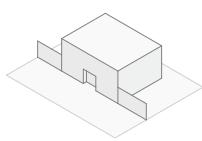
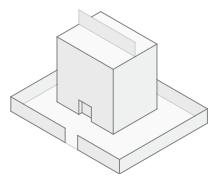
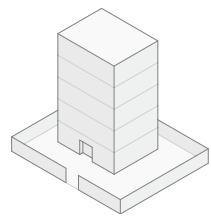
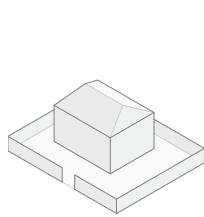


1890

1970

2016

RESILIENCE



CATEGORIES & PATTERNS

chapter 1 |

SOCIAL SPACES

compound courtyard
rush-hour spaces
shaded areas
commercial hot spot

chapter 2 |

INCOME GENERATION

fixed retail
nomadic vendor
window shop
sefer factory

chapter 3 |

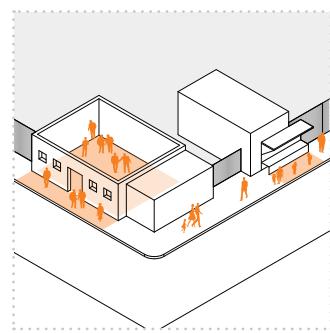
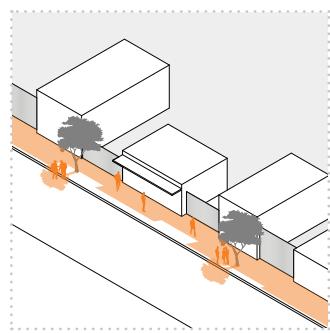
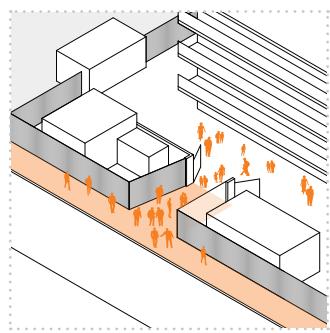
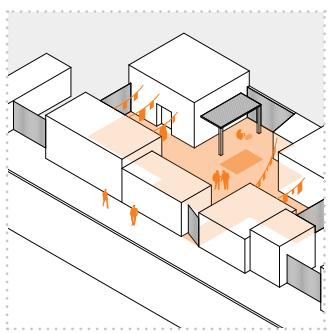
BUILDING TECHNIQUES

concrete grid & hollow blocks
chika technique
kor-kor additions
palace veranda

chapter 4 |

BORDERS

unwelcoming gap
retaining wall
proactive barrier
compound threshold



chapter 1

INCOME GENERATION

COMPOUND COURTYARD

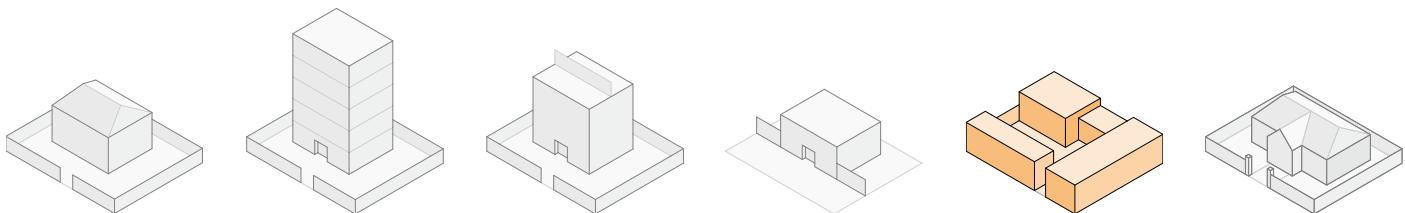
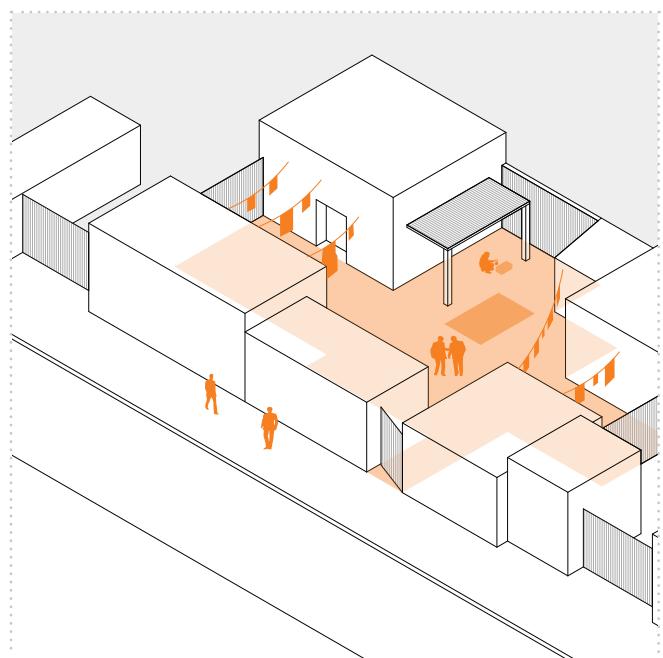


| A COMMUNITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY |

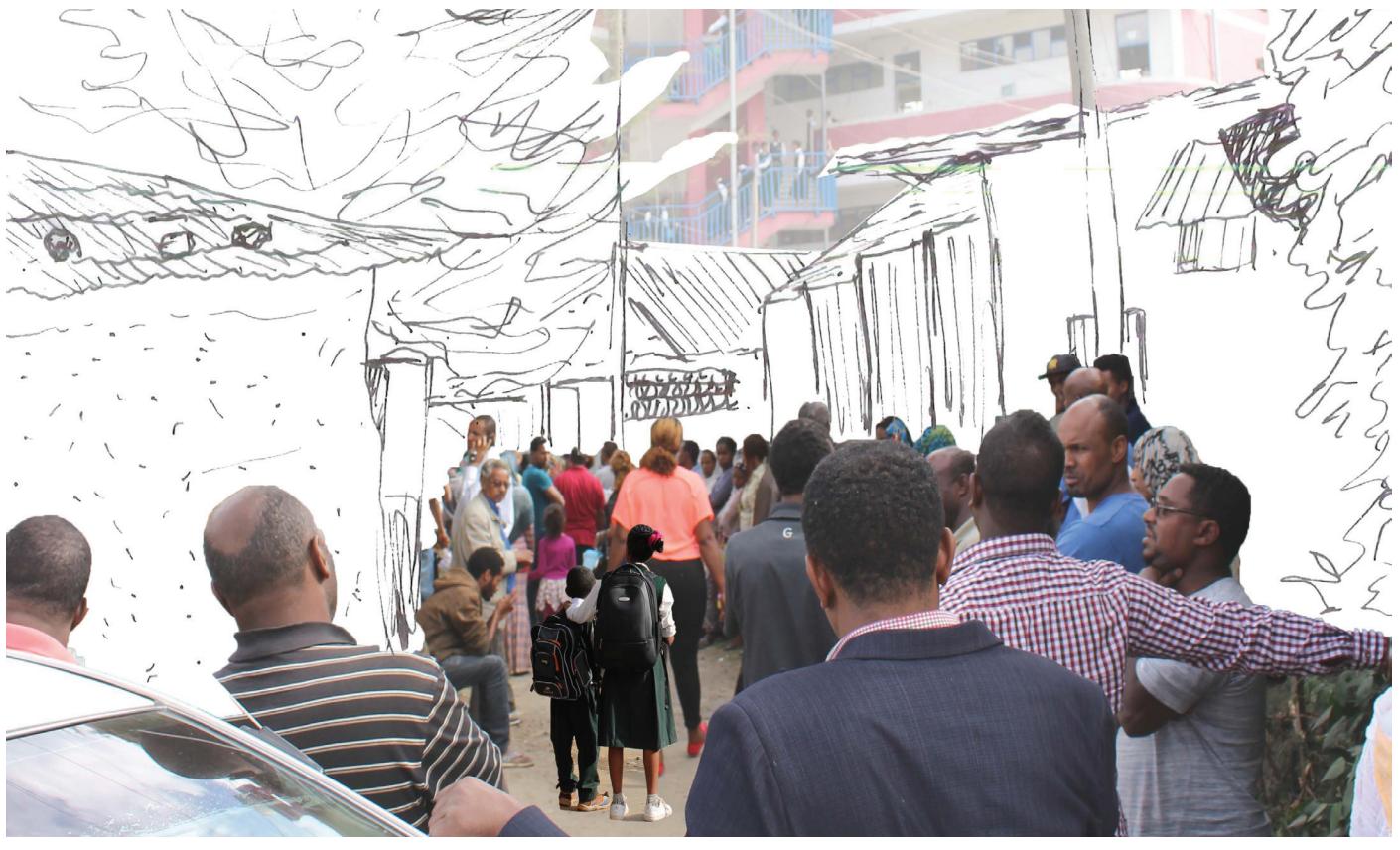
The residential compound layout derives from an organization of a group of informal houses around the same common space. Such community spaces are accessible from gates generally roughly built with corrugated metal sheets.

The courtyard is shared by an average of 15 households: it is the place where both the everyday life activities (as drying spices, washing clothes, drinking coffee and cooking meals) as well as the social interaction among the members of the different families take place, strengthening their sense of community belonging.

In the case of Dejach Wube sefer, the peculiarity is that inhabitants tend to remain closer to their specific compound, creating a community within the bigger community of the Sefer, rather than share the same interests with closer ones.



RUSH-HOUR SPACE

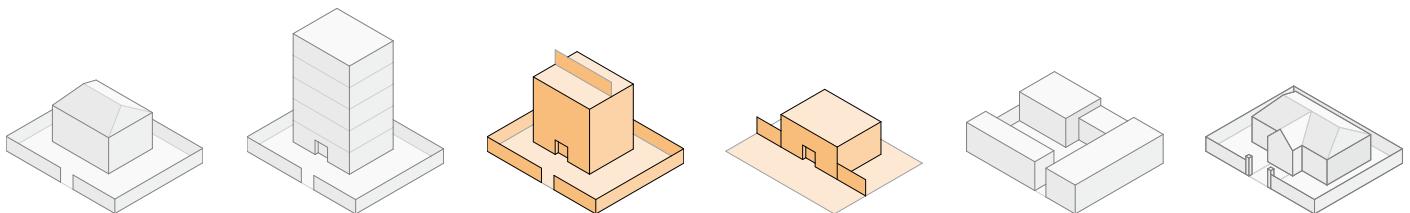
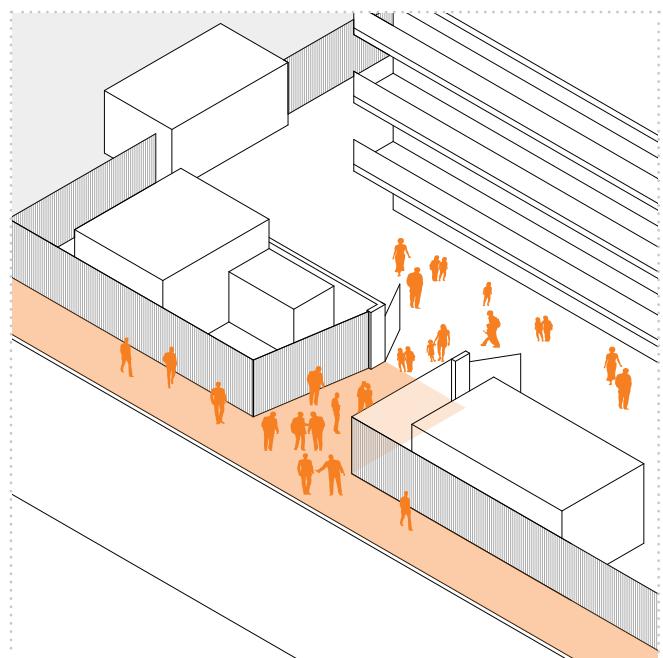


| IDENTITY IN TIME |

Rush-hour spaces are not necessarily well defined or physically bounded areas, they are spaces which are "activated" in specific time lapses during the daytime. Even for a few minutes or hours, they become hotspots in where people gather for daily habits or specific necessities. Significant examples in the Dejach Wube are the Tej Houses and the outer spaces in front of schools.

These spaces become active when certain activities take place. A typical example for this sefer is the moment when the parents pick up their children from school during lunchtime or in the afternoon.

One important feature shared by these spaces is their belonging to a specific target group: in the case of the Tej house, the majority of the users are retired elderly man who visit between late afternoon and late night. Whereas the gate in front of the school activates during the daytime.



SHADED AREA



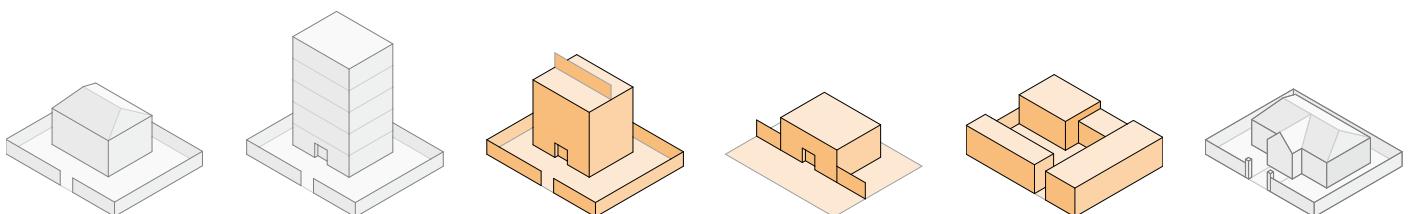
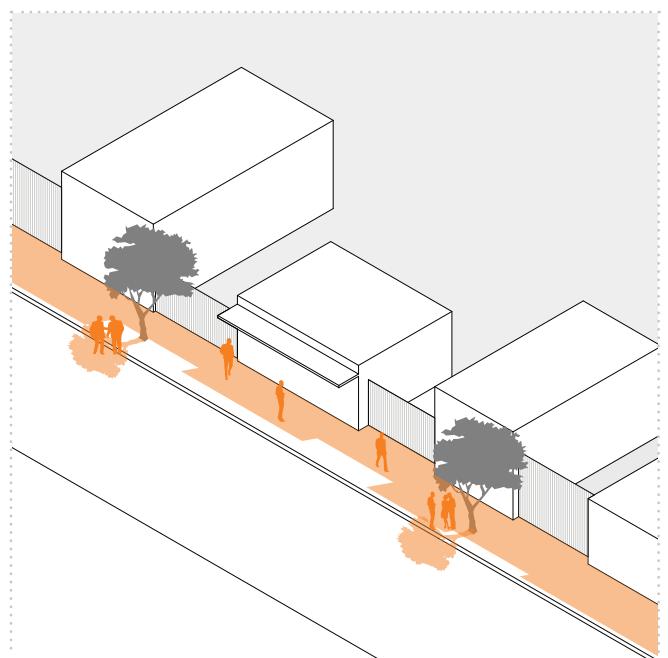
| SPOTS FOR SHELTER |

These spots are scattered around the perimeter and on the main streets that cross-lengthwise and transversely the sefer. There are two main types of shade which help people to find shelter from atmospheric conditions: natural, taking advantage from the existing vegetation, and man-made, provided by built structures.

In both cases these "protected" spaces are used by people in different ways: both for leisure as well as for informal businesses or as a temporary refuge for homeless.

The shaded areas provide for many commercial activities and social spaces.

As shown in the "BORDER" patterns section, handmade structures usually take advantages of existing elements in the urban fabric that can be a physical support (retaining wall, existing fence, perimeter walls etc.).



COMMERCIAL HOT SPOT

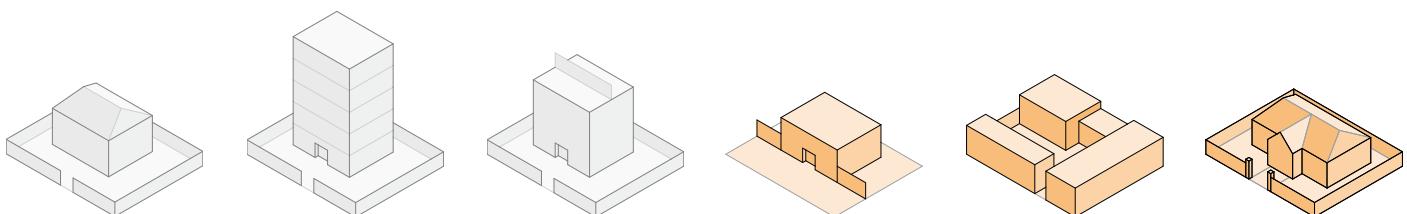
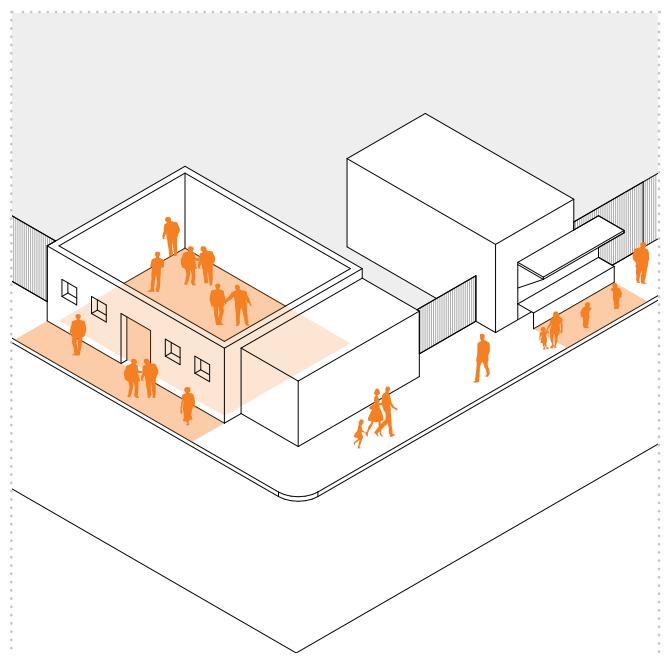


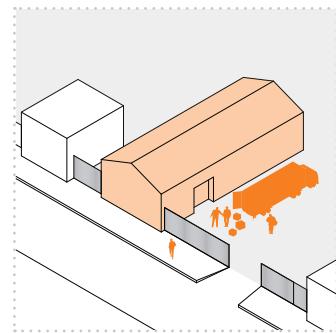
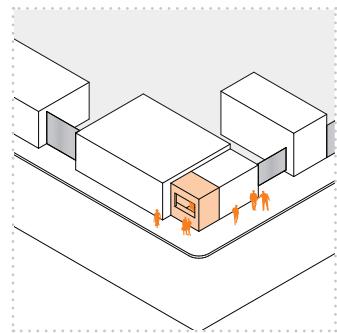
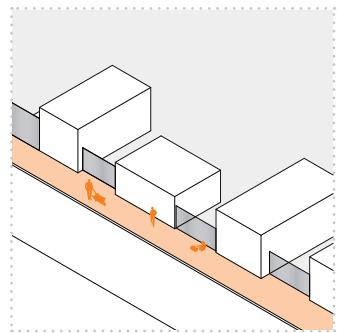
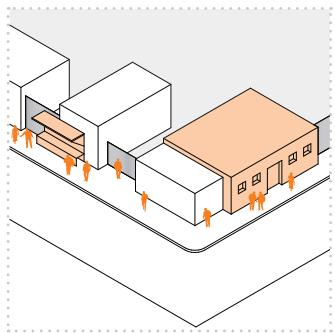
| HUBS FOR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS |

Informal settlements generally are dynamic and lively organisms: partly because of nodes recognizable in the different districts. "Hubs" usually concentrates in a nucleus where different functions and activities are held.

Especially during daytime, these spaces are occupied by local people: in front, behind or next to the informal businesses generally people gather under a temporary shelter or under natural shades provided by existing vegetation (see pattern SHADED AREAS).

People which hang out in such spots are varied and generally grouped by ages: in front of shelters which sell food or coffee, it's common to see teenagers or people from 20 to 30 playing cards, listen to the music or playing tennis table. In front of selling or grinding spices, it's common to meet groups of old men and women probably retired speaking or drinking a cup of coffee together.





chapter 2

INCOME GENERATION

FIXED RETAIL

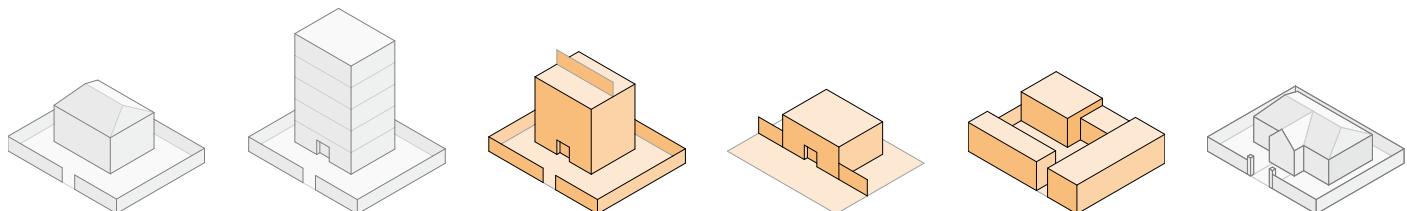
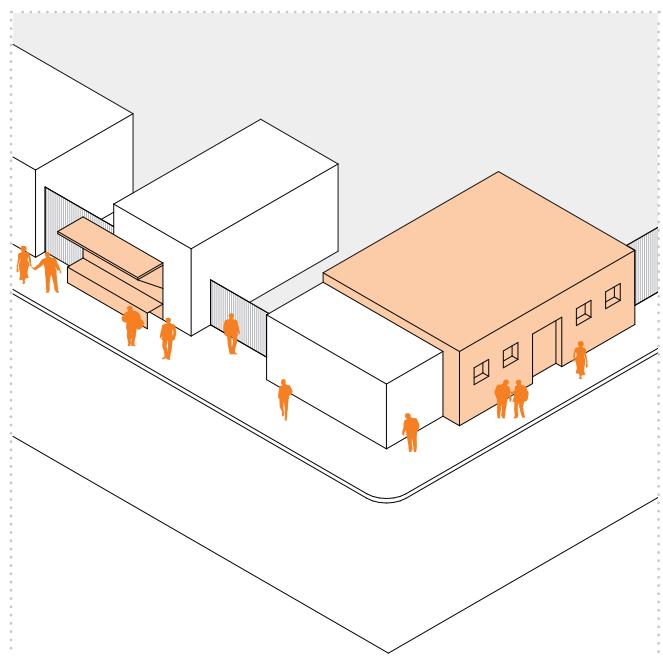


| SPROUTS OF FORMAL ECONOMY |

This category refers to the activities that take place in specific buildings that cannot be moved and therefore represent fixed points of interest for the entire Sefer. Due to its opposite spatial characterization, this group can be considered as the opposite of nomadic vendors.

Bars, food sale, and small manufacture enterprises, usually take place in these spaces. While these stable practices can't take advantage of the possibility to move, on the other hand, are highly popular as spaces for the community. (see Social Spaces – Activities).

It's interesting to observe their different materializations, construction methods are usually varied. Sometimes they highlight a particular trend of typology modification when a part of the dwelling changes its function in order to have a commercial activity facing the street (doors or window shops) and still keeping on the back the remaining part as a dwelling.



NOMADIC VENDER

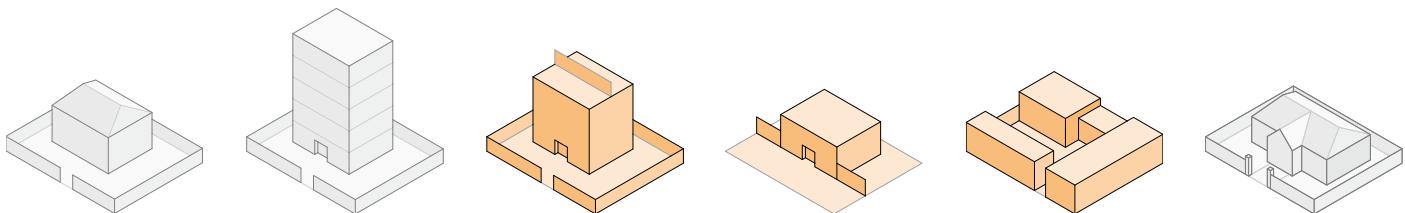
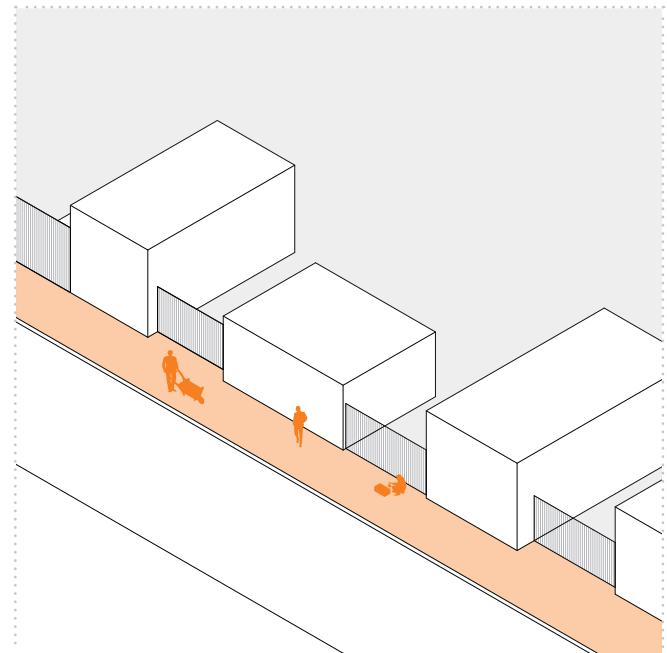


| THE MOVABLE COMPONENT OF ECONOMY |

Informal settlements have a precise economic structure based on "nomadic vendors". These activities are related to specific time lapses and spaces occupation: businesses, for instance, generally lasts from the sunrise till the sunset, trying to take advantages from the common rush hours.

Nomadic vendors settle in precise areas nearby commercial streets and near by hotspots within the Sefer which can provide shelter or support for temporary structures that could be easily disassembled at the end of the day. The products that they sell are generally related with manufacturing (shoes, clothes etc..) as well as food (fruits, vegetables, sandwiches, coffee etc..).

Nomadic vendors take advantage of the economic opportunities all along the borders, using movable wooden structures like carts which allows an even higher flexibility in terms of transferring from one place to another.



WINDOW SHOP

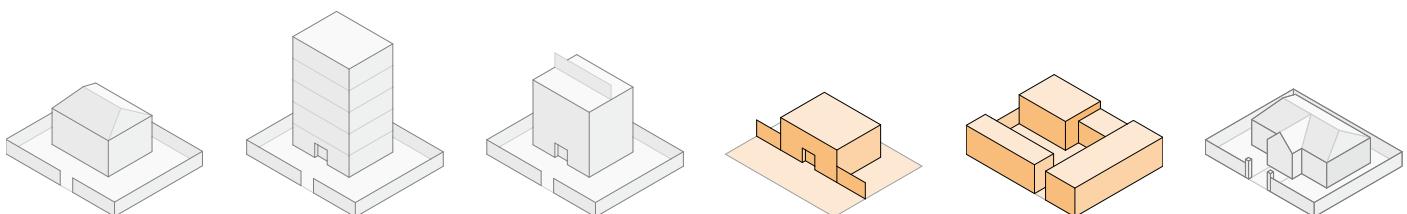
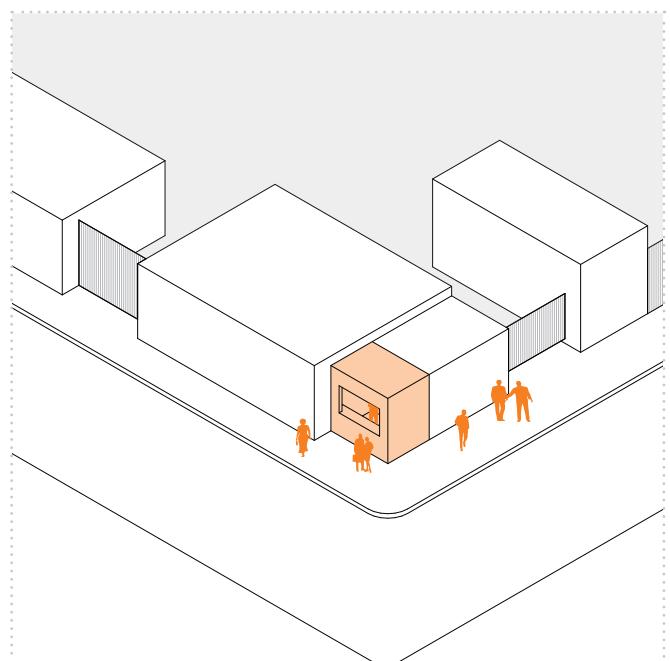


| A BUSINESS PROJECTION ON THE STREET |

As the title suggests, the window shop is a projection in the street, a manifestation of a private business into the public realm. These openings towards the street belong to a more static idea of commercial "enterprise" and usually derive from modifications of the informal existing buildings.

These spaces, especially related to food and beverage sale, are defined by small corrugated metal sheet additions in direct contact with the street in order to take as much advantage as possible of the pedestrian traffic.

Because of the high competition of the more structured shops (see FIXED RETAIL) on the main roads the window shops tend to stay on the inner streets of the sefer, in order to avoid the direct competition.



SEFER FACTORY

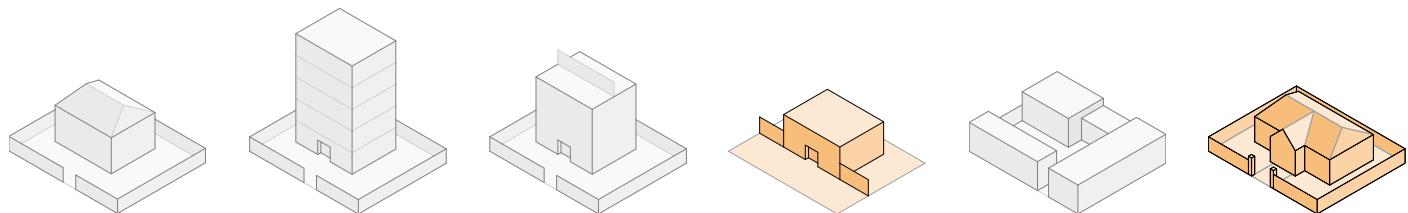
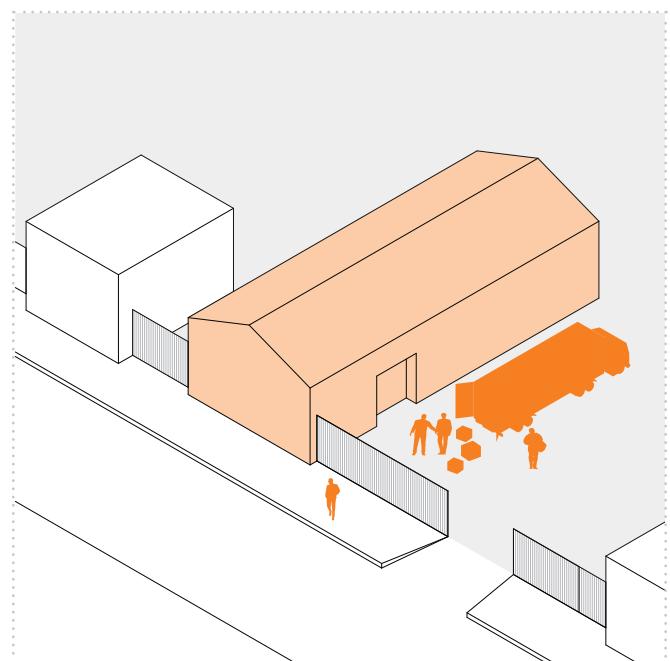


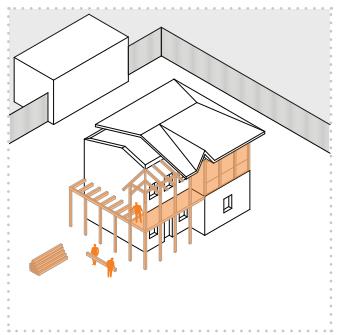
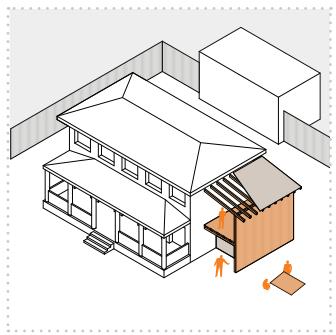
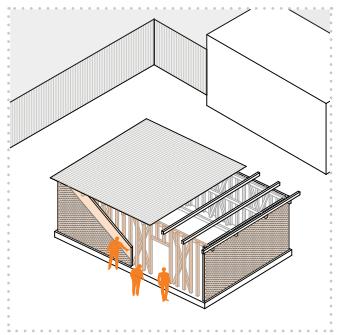
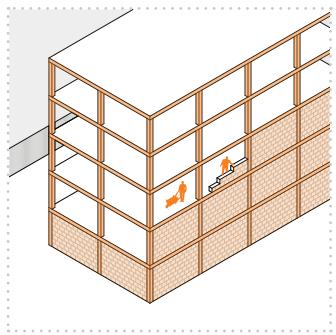
| A PECULIAR OCCUPATION OF THE SEFER HERITAGE |

The presence of sefer factory is a typical feature of the Dejach Wube sefer. The activities that take place within them are specifically related to secondary and tertiary sectors. Among the activities present in the sefer there are a wood workshop, a rubber reuse workshop, a leather factory and several metal workshops (especially on the northern border).

One of the main characteristics of such factories is the relation with the existing building stock. They tend to settle in old unused buildings: after a partial or total renovation, the activities starts and consequently expand its influence on the Sefer and also outside its boundaries.

Another consequence of such bigger businesses, due to their manpower demand, is the increasing of the number of workers that daily move to Dejach Wube for their jobs.





chapter 3

BUILDING TECHNIQUES

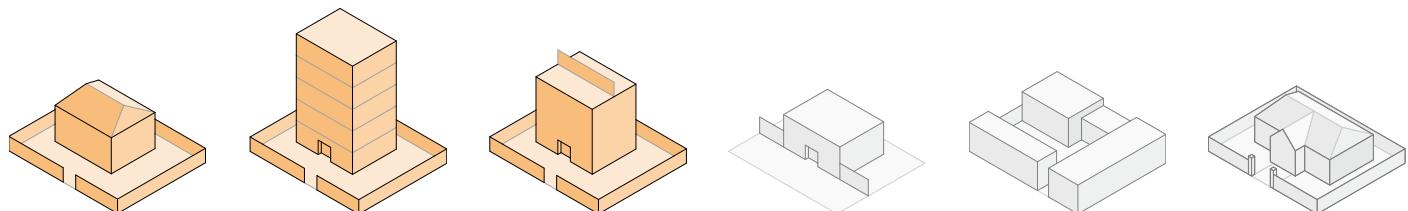
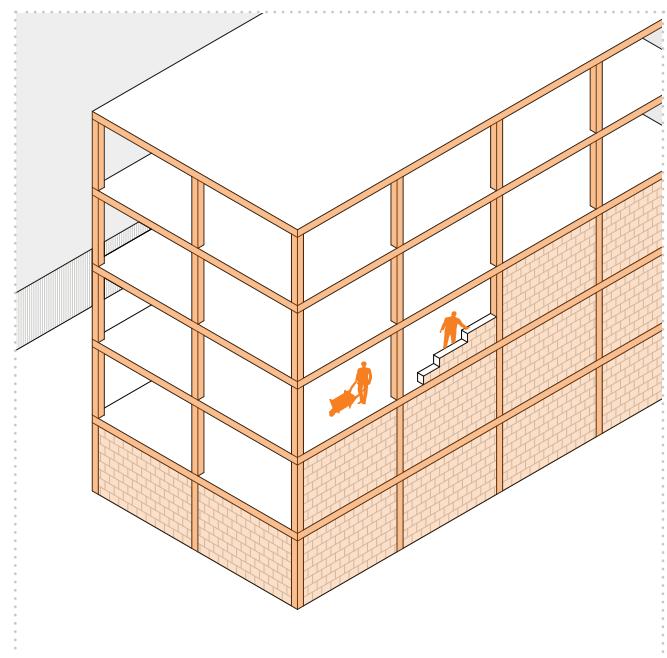
CONCRETE GRID & HOLLOW BLOCKS



| THE CURRENT METHODOLOGY |

The hectic construction development happening in Addis Ababa is mainly supported by Western technique of concrete column-beam framework with hollow blocks infills. This methodology was imported in order to reduce the construction time and solve the density problems of the traditional "chika" houses, permitting a higher level of performance and façade customizations.

The construction process of the whole structure is organized floor by floor: load bearing concrete framework is firstly cast in-situ with the help of an outer temporary wooden scaffolding made of eucalyptus poles. After casting the structural skeleton, the façade gaps are filled with hollow blocks made of water, aggregate, and cement and compressed in iron molds. In order to reduce the transport expenses as well as to increase the efficiency of the whole construction process, the blocks are generally produced "in-situ", with temporary shelters to accommodate the machinery.



CHIKA TECHNIQUE

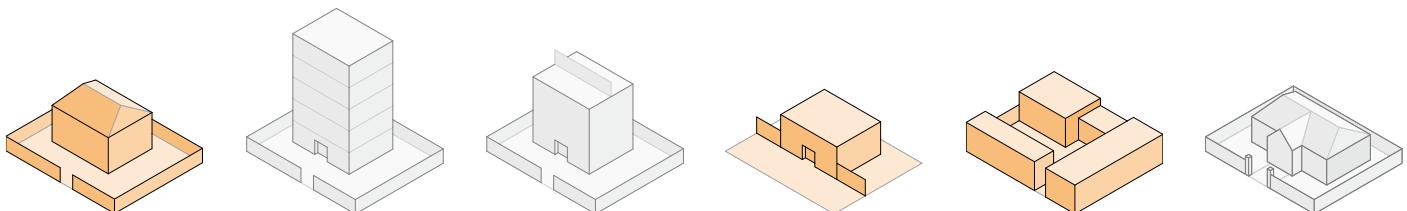
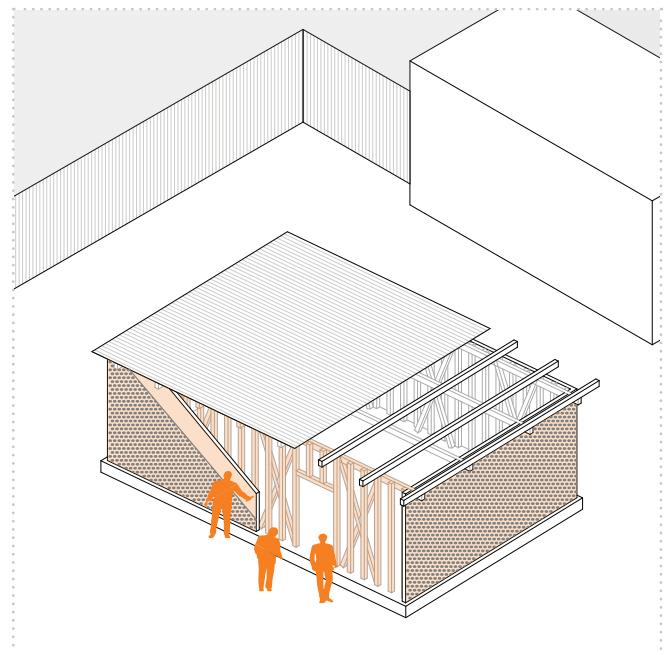


| THE TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGY |

In Addis Ababa almost 90% of the informal houses are built using the traditional technique of "chika" construction, inherited from the first nomadic settlements in the country.

The foundations of the house are dug in the ground and afterward filled with stones, creating a solid as well as isolated basement. The structure of the façade is built in four main steps with the usage of generally two different materials: wooden eucalyptus stuck and mixture of mud and teff straw as isolating and finishing outer layer.

In order to give more stability to the structure, diagonal poles are sometimes fixed to the vertical ones, working as modern diagonal bracing. In some cases, inhabitants add an additional outer layer made with concrete (2/3 centimeters) as plaster. In this specific case is possible to observe in the façade some handmade holes working as support for the outer finishing.



KOR-KOR ADDITIONS

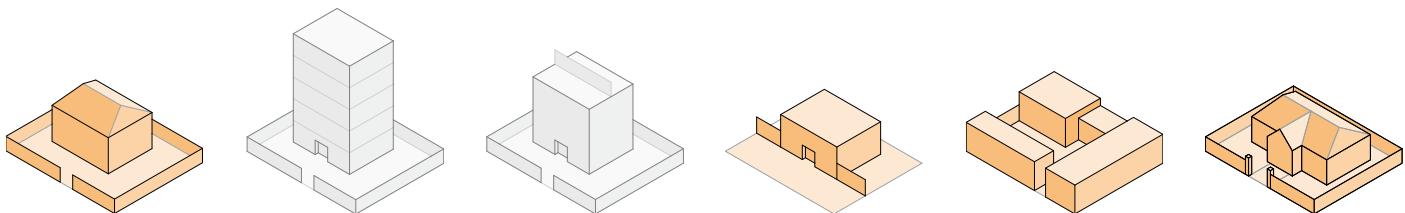
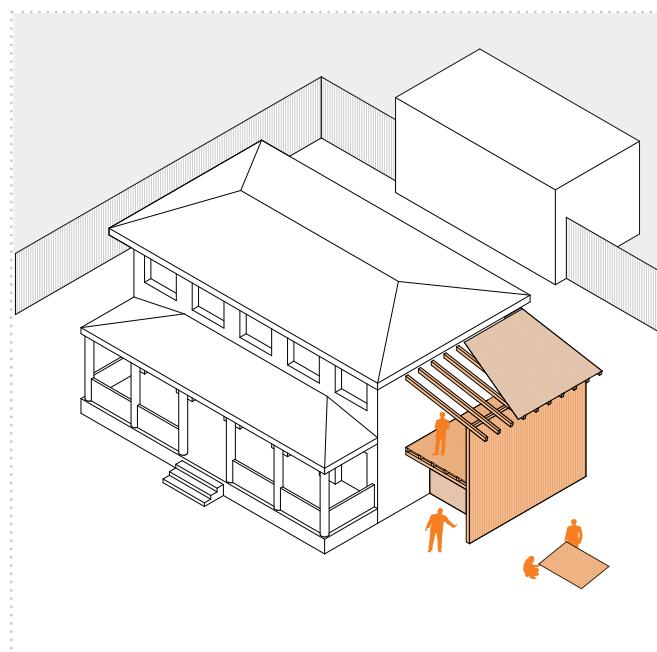


| TEMPORARY MATERIAL FOR PERMANENT RESULT |

The single dwelling in the informal settlement can be considered as a "variable entity" for its material realization as well as its internal layout: the unit, in fact, is usually modified to accommodate changes in people number, divisions among households etc.

These modifications generally are developed in a short period of time, mainly using the corrugated metal sheets as the main material due to its high level of availability (both brand new as well as recycled) and really low cost.

The corrugated metal sheet (commonly called kor-kor) is used both for the facades as well as for the roofs. The construction of extra thinner walls in the immediate outer space of the dwellings witnesses also a different use of these new threshold related to extra communal space as well as business opportunities



HISTORICAL VERANDA



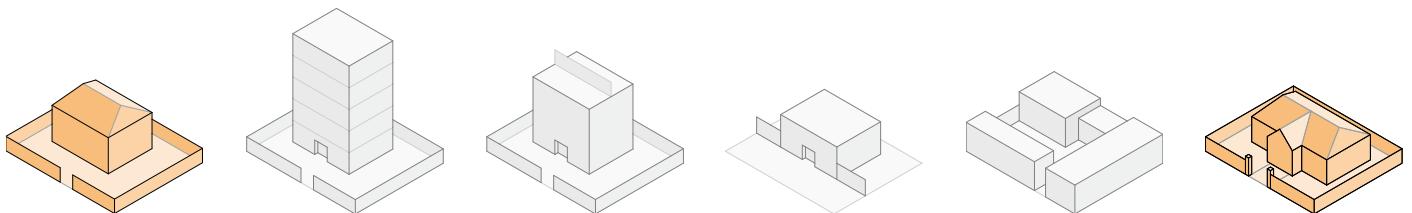
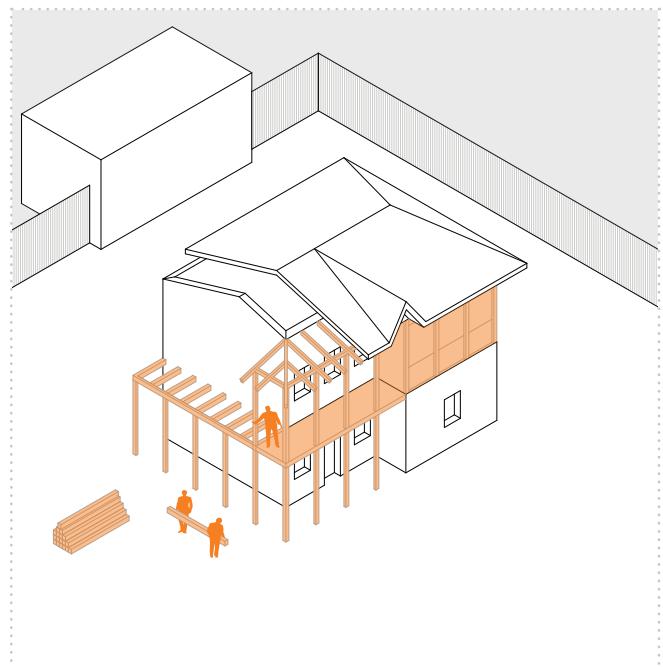
| AN INHERITANCE OF THE PAST |

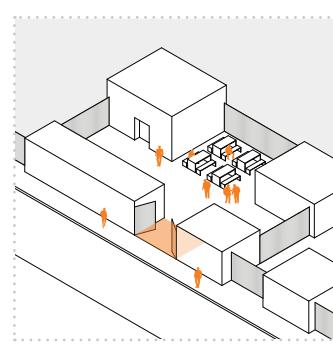
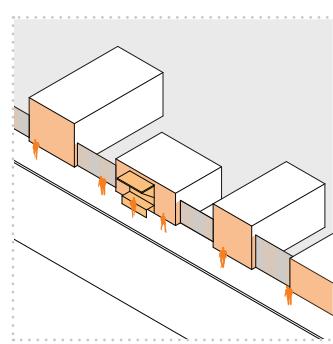
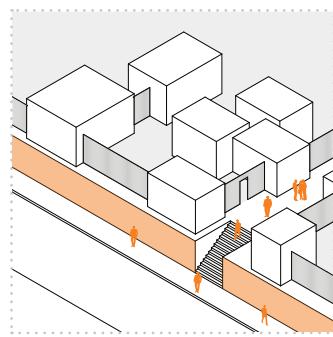
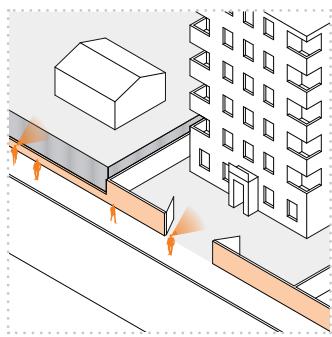
The special construction of the veranda is typical of the traditional villas spread in the Dejach Wube Sefer.

This space usually placed on the first floor of the building is built with wood and creates a covered terrace with a view on the street underneath; it's one of the most peculiar characteristics of the old villas and the logic of this space still remain in the new villas interventions.

The solid framework permits also a high level of customization of the facade: the gaps can be filled in different ways according to the decision to open or close the space to the outside.

Despite the changes during the time, the veranda technique is one of the few elements that seems to resist, preserving a quality of the past.





chapter 4

BORDERS

UNWELCOMING GAP

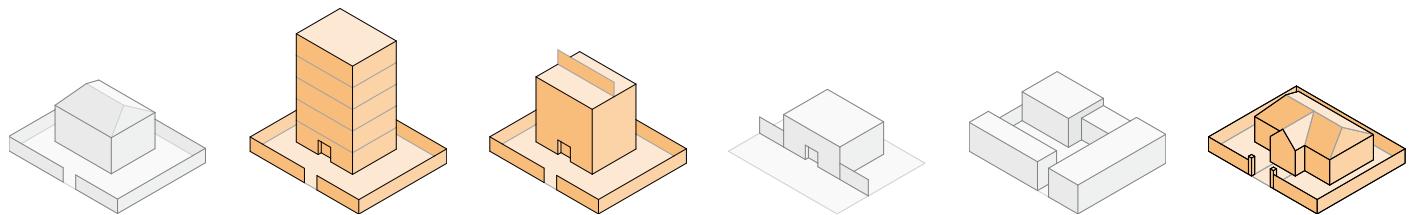
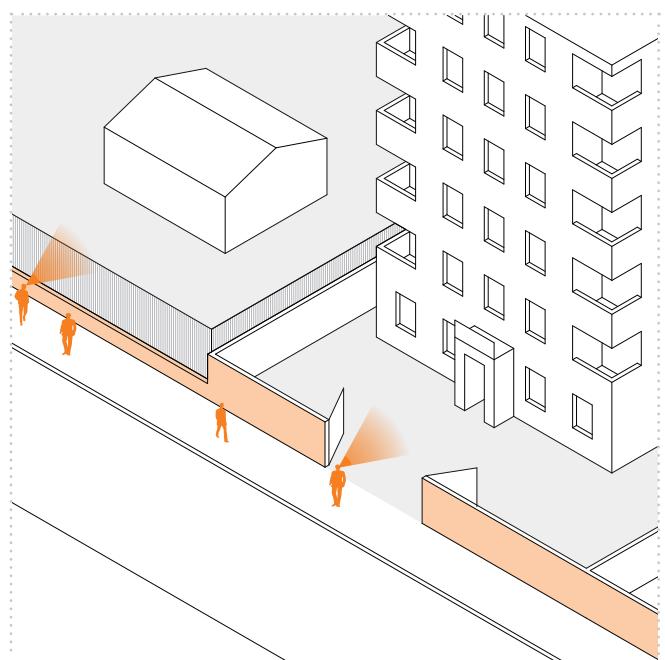


| AN UNCONSCIOUS THRESHOLD TO NOT OVERSTEP |

Boundaries have not just to be intended as mere physical plot demarcation. People, even if unconsciously, are able to recognize also abstract thresholds. In some cases, functions or institutional values of the buildings define abstract thresholds and limit the entrance for unauthorized people.

In the Dejach Wube sefer there are several examples that show the efficiency of such unconscious limit to not overstep, a remarkable case is the police academy and the attached police department.

Even if the gate that defines the threshold between pedestrian walkway and the inner courtyard is the majority of the time open, unauthorized people don't dare to cross it. The same logic of boundaries is also applied in the telecommunication center, hotels, and banks.



RETAINING WALL

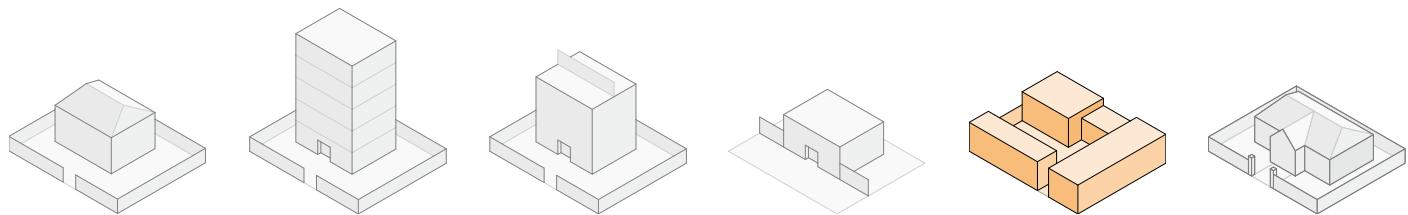
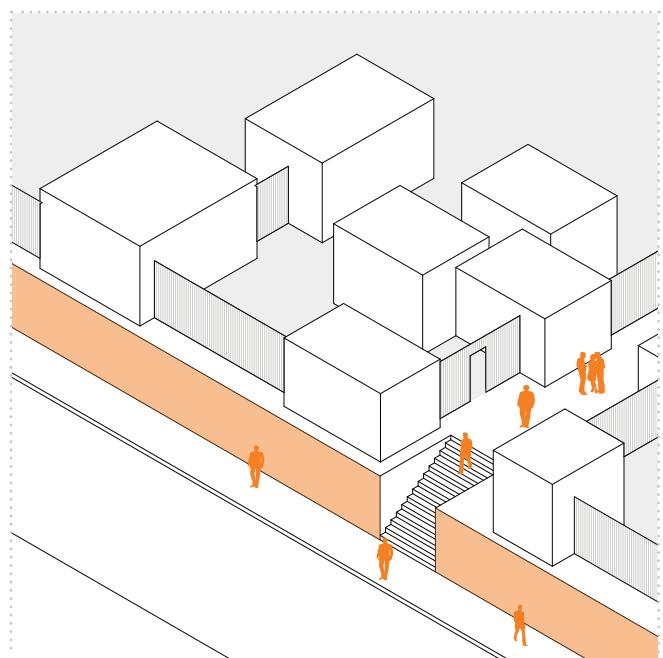


| DEALING WITH THE DIFFERENCE OF HEIGHT |

The North-Western part of Dejach Wube Sefer presents a prominent difference of height with some spots that reach a percentage of 40% of slope. The steepness of specific zones consequently make them directly inaccessible from the main street and forced people to find solutions to the issue.

In some areas the presence of stone stairs solves the problem of the declivity for the pedestrian traffic; in other cases, for example for vehicular access, the differences of height are solved through steep slopes accessible by cars.

The activities are highly influenced by the presence of this peculiar topographical condition: remarkable in this sense is the difference between the southern border (flat) and the northern one (steep). In the first case, the flat limits are "activated" by informal and formal activities. In the second case instead of the retaining wall works just as a barrier, almost eliminating all the informal businesses.



PROACTIVE BARRIER

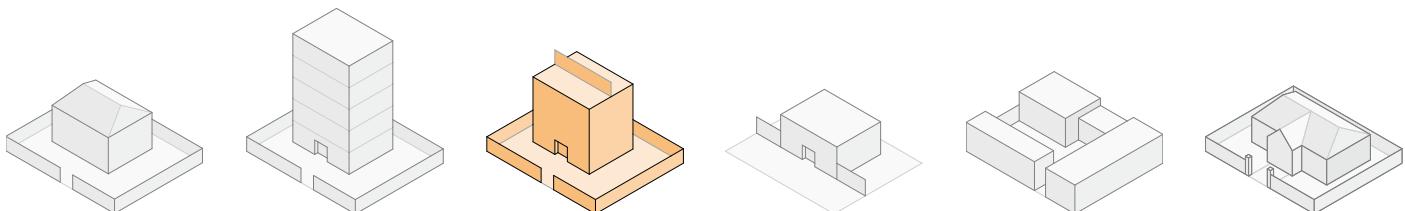
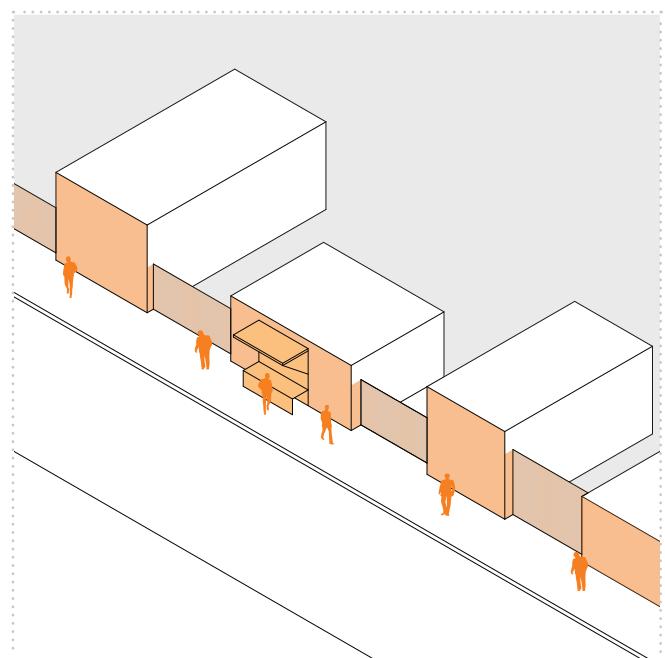


| THE TYPICAL MANIFESTATION OF INACCESSIBILITY |

In Addis Ababa, the idea of the wall is not only used to claim and define a property but it is also interpreted in different ways.

The border of a villa and the one of a general informal compound varies its physical configurations: in the first case, the material used are stone or bricks with sharpened broken glass pieces or barbed wire. In the second case instead, due to the lack of money, the typical material is corrugated metal sheet: the perimeter is still claimed but it appears less strong and highly modifiable.

The wall has also a pro-active role in terms of being able to activate the public life on its exterior side. On its outside, it offers the possibility for homeless people to use it as a support for their temporary shelter structures, as well as for nomadic vendors that have the possibility to stop and expose temporarily their products.



COMPOUND THRESHOLD



| A TRANSITION OF DIFFERENT SPACES |

Within the Dejach Wube sefer, due to its high level of informality, a variety of different spaces from public to private can be identified and precisely defined.

One characteristic of the accesses to the compound courtyard is the presence of gates made with corrugated metal sheet that marks the passage from the street to the private area of the courtyard; however the transition is less harsh compared to gates of the villas: the smooth transition derives from the fact that such gates are usually open, giving a continuity to the sight of what exist after the limit.

Therefore, during daytime the role of the gate within the informal settlements is not related to a matter of protection since is accessible to everyone: it defines a more "symbolic" threshold, highlighting the act of passing to a more inclusive and more intimate dimension of the inner courtyards.

